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ABSTRACT

These 11 essays address the importance of psychological assessments for prospective seminary students. The articles are primarily for seminary officials who make admission decisions based on testing and the analysis of test results. The chapters also discuss questions and issues that all seminary faculty address on a daily basis: maturity of seminarians, spiritual direction, and appropriate responses to situations which might be aided by counseling. Some of the broad concerns covered here that the vocation counselor may face when working with seminary applicants and students include assessment techniques for both psychosexual maturity and addictive behaviors. Four separate chapters address specific psychological issues: (1) spiritual direction and psychotherapy and the problems of uncritically mixing these together; (2) counseling while in seminary; (3) a comparative analysis of psychological screening test results of candidates for ordained ministry; and (4) psychological testing in vocational selection. Since seminaries are more ethnically diverse than in past years, separate chapters discuss the concerns and needs of African American, Latino, and Asian American seminarians. Finally, legal matters are covered with overviews of canon law, psychological testing for admission to seminary, and legal considerations concerning civil law and confidentiality issues. (RJM)

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Psychology, Counseling and the Seminarian

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Robert Wister
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Preface

by Most Rev. Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B.

"The whole work of priestly formation would be deprived of its necessary foundation if it lacked a suitable human formation." These sentiments of the International Synod of Bishops on Priestly Formation of 1990 are embraced by Pope John Paul II in the apostolic exhortation, *Pastores Dabo Vobis.** They are echoed as well in the fourth edition of *The Program of Priestly Formation (PPF).*** Sound human development is the irreplaceable basis for spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation of candidates for the priesthood. The same sentiments underscore the timeliness of the present volume of essays.

Ranging from counseling and psychotherapy to psychometric testing, the psychological sciences, both practical and applied, have contributed significantly to our understanding of human behavior. In doing so, they can potentially make important contributions to priestly formation. This volume of essays aids that task in four ways. (1) *Updating*. Because the psychological sciences share the tentativeness of practical and empirical undertakings, the layman needs updating on their current status in order to use them intelligently. Several essays perform this function. (2) *Delineation*. Other essays help to delineate different forms of therapy and counseling and their relation to spiritual direction. This is equally important. In correct perspective, counseling and therapy can play an important but ancillary role in priestly education and cannot substitute for spiritual or pastoral formation. (3) *Ramifications*. Other essays explore civil and canonical implications and are particularly timely. What are the seminary's obligations in regard to student records? What approaches does contemporary jurisprudence take to confidentiality issues? Such questions are increasingly important in seminary formation. (4) *Advice*. Altogether, these essays are a source of advice on complex and delicate topics. Seminary administrators, formation faculty and vocations personnel will doubtless find them helpful.

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*Pastores Dabo Vobis, 43.

**Program of Priestly Formation, 92.

The Fourth Edition of *The Program for Priestly Formation* has created the need for a new kind of literature about priestly formation. It represents established norms directing the education of men for the priesthood in the United States. But priestly formation also crosses contemporary disciplines which need to be explored in order to understand how best to implement those norms. The present volume represents the successful beginnings of such exploratory literature for which the editor, Father Robert Wister and the contributors deserve considerable credit.

The Most Reverend Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B. is the Archbishop of Indianapolis, Indiana. He also serves as Chairman of the Bishops' Committee on Priestly Formation of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. ❧

Introduction

by Robert J. Wister

❧ 517. Seminary administrators should consider psychological assessment an integral part of the admission procedures. Due care should be observed in correctly interpreting the results of psychological testing in light of the racial or ethnic background of applicants.

518. Seminaries should draw up guidelines for psychologists and other admission personnel describing objectively those traits and attitudes which give hope of a true vocation as well as those characteristics which indicate that a priestly vocation is not present. Seminaries should ensure that those employed in the psychological evaluation of seminarians are well versed in and supportive of the church's expectations of candidates for the priesthood especially in regard to celibacy.

519. In the admission procedure, the life experiences which candidates bring to the seminary should be openly and forthrightly discussed. The seminarians' level of insight and motivation to address areas such as interpersonal relations and psychosexual development are important criteria for admission. Seminaries may have to delay admission of some candidates until these personal issues are better identified or resolved.

520. Attention should be given to the family background of all applicants. Those from particularly dysfunctional families require careful evaluation before admission. At times the seminary may be able to help seminarians through counseling or other programs. Students' willingness to continue to address family and personal issues should be determined prior to admission. However, in those instances when long-term therapeutic

> intervention may be needed, it should be accomplished before candidates enter a program of priestly formation. If these issues are serious, the candidates' application may have to be refused.
>
> 521. In regard to results of psychological testing and other confidential materials, the seminary should observe closely all legal requirements and utilize appropriate release forms. (CIC, 220) Throughout the admission process, the candidates' right to privacy should be respected and the careful management of confidential materials observed.
>
> *The Program of Priestly Formation*,
> fourth edition, 1993, para 517-521.

With these laconic phrases, the bishops of the United States have conferred a very complex and exceedingly important task upon seminary administrators and faculty. Our goal is to give them assistance as they carry out the bishops' mandate regarding the psychological testing and counseling of seminarians.

This book has its genesis in the Lilly Endowment's "Quality in Ministry" project. Assessment of applicants to the seminary and their continuing development form an important part of attaining the goal of quality in the formation of ministers.

The bishops' mandate, although strengthened, is not new. The use of psychological testing and counseling has been a part of Roman Catholic seminary admission and evaluation for several generations. In some institutions it has been done with care and expertise, in others less well. Presentations relating to testing and counseling have often been part of the deliberations of the Seminary Department of the NCEA at its annual convention. In 1979 NCEA conducted a workshop on testing and counseling and published these papers in a book entitled *Seminaries and Psychology*. As the years pass it becomes necessary for faculty and administration to renew their acquaintance with these issues.

It is a commonplace to say that our contemporary American society is intrigued with the "therapeutic" and is extremely "litigious." However, there is more than a grain of truth in such statements. Newsmagazine and television constantly barrage us with the innermost thoughts, desires and fantasies of our neighbors.

"Twelve-step" programs abound. Bookstores are filled with volumes encouraging "self-help" programs of varying quality. Our society and its vocabulary are suffused with psychological terminology. Often the level of discourse is reduced to "psychobabble." Psychotherapy itself has been examined and, in some cases, found wanting.

As in the past, today's seminarians reflect the society from which they come. Recognizing the changes in society and in seminarians, the bishops have mandated additional preparatory training for candidates who apply for admission to the theologate. The diversity in background and in personal experience of seminarians requires even more stringent admission procedures. Because of this, it is important to utilize all means available to assure that those admitted are able to fully participate in the formation program and reach its goals. A very significant part of admission and continuing evaluation of seminarians necessarily involves psychological testing and where needed, psychological counseling. Psychological testing and counseling are not ends in themselves. They are tools which can be used in screening applicants and in assisting the human development of seminarians.

Psychology, like any science which deals with the human person, is not an exact science. It has limits. Its methods and conclusions require analysis and interpretation. Such interpretation must be as informed as possible. This book will hopefully assist in bridging the gap between the seminary and the psychologist. The writers do not pretend to give "all the answers." Rather, they give guidance and direction to the seminaries. This will encourage the seminaries to raise questions, examine their testing and counseling programs, and improve them.

The chapters are designed to first present a discussion of questions and issues with which all seminary faculty deal on a daily basis: maturity of seminarians, specific problems, spiritual direction and appropriate responses to situations which might be aided by counseling. A discussion of testing follows. Although it is of interest to all, its chief purpose is to assist those who are involved in making admission decisions which involve testing and the analysis of test results. Today's seminarians are ethnically and racially diverse. This requires that all involved in seminary programs, in admissions and in formation, be aware of the cultural implications this diversity has in interpreting test results and utilizing counseling. Lastly, our "litigious" society makes it essential that all be aware of the legal and ethical implications of testing and counseling procedures.

We begin with a discussion of psychosexual maturity and various conditions which can affect growth negatively. Psychosexual development and maturity are important criteria in the admission of a candidate for the priesthood. In particular the life of celibacy requires a high level of maturity and self-awareness. Frank Valcour discusses the process of maturation and the signs of maturity. Negative conditions which can affect a person's maturation are then confronted by Joseph Sehner. Since a large proportion of the population of the United States is affected by one addiction or another, we may safely assume that a number of seminary candidates are similarly affected.

A major component of the seminary program is spiritual formation. Essential to spiritual formation is spiritual direction, of which counseling is a part. There is often a hazy boundary between psychotherapy and spiritual direction, particularly if the director or therapist is a person trained in both disciplines. There are clear dangers when the director or therapist is expert in one area and amateur in the other. Charles Shelton gives guidance on the interrelation of these disciplines.

The implications of discerning psychosexual maturity and addictions, of discriminating between spiritual direction and psychotherapy become very practical in the discussion of counseling while in the seminary. Joyce Ridick points out when it would be more beneficial for such counseling to take place prior to admissions or during a leave of absence. In addition, the many practical considerations of choosing therapists and clarifying the relationships among the counselor, the seminary and the client are explored.

The previous chapters expose us to the lexicon and to some of the principles of psychology. Testing is able to give us indicators of possible problems. It can also assist the candidate in learning more about his strengths and weaknesses. The most commonly used measure has been the MMPI. Joseph O'Neill outlines the history of the use of the MMPI in screening of candidates by several churches. James Hennessy analyzes a variety of testing instruments, their strengths and their weaknesses. Like O'Neill, he also points out the biases inherent in interpretation based upon general American cultural norms.

Every human person is unique. Yet there are commonalities which groups share. These commonalities may not be obvious to those from differing backgrounds. Assumptions of one group regarding patterns of behavior of others may cause misunderstandings and create problems which could be easily avoided. In order to avoid bias, Joseph Verrett, Maria Flores and Roger Champoux offer insights into the ethnic and racial backgrounds of African American, Latino and Asian American seminarians. The interpretation of test results of those of differing cultures requires knowledge of their backgrounds. Similarly, it is necessary to understand cultural attitudes which can influence the effectiveness of counseling.

While most of this book is informative, advisory and exhortative, the last section is more directive in style and tone. Testing and counseling involve us in a labyrinth of legal and ethical considerations. The right to privacy in canon law is a moral and ethical obligation as Sharon Euart points out. Only the most naive and uninformed would ignore the possible implications of inattention to the requirements of the law. Phillip Harris and John Liekwig emphasize that care of records and control of their release and utilization requires attention and work. Lack of attention and care could result in litigation and the squandering of the resources of the church. Responsible stewardship demands that proper care be taken at every stage of testing and counseling. Anything less is irresponsible.

NCEA and the Roman Catholic seminary community express their gratitude to the Lilly Endowment, Inc. for making this publication possible. We express special thanks to Mr. Fred Hofheinz for his assistance and encouragement at every stage of this project.

Msgr. Robert J. Wister is a priest of the archdiocese of Newark. He holds a doctorate in ecclesiastical history from the Gregorian University. From 1988 to 1993 he served as executive director of the Seminary Department of the National Catholic Educational Association. He is an assistant professor in the Department of Historical Studies of the School of Theology of Seton Hall University. ❧

1

Psychosexual Maturity

by Frank Valcour

❧ Is maturity a totally relative term? Or can a definition be given? As "grace builds upon nature," spiritual growth presupposes a certain level of human maturity. The factors influencing the process of maturation can be examined and the signs of maturity demonstrated.

A CONTEXT FOR UNDERSTANDING

Biological

The coming together of the genetic material from a unique ovum and a unique sperm cell initiates a process of development and maturation which extends over each individual's lifetime. There is something mysterious in the way all the information comprising the blueprint for a human body is contained in these tiny particles. But the blueprint is not the structure itself and immediately after conception the building of the body is affected by countless environmental factors and influences. Our genes provide a certain range of developmental possibilities but our path through that range is conditioned by an almost infinite array of extrinsic factors.

Some lifelong characteristics such as gender, eye color, blood type and certain hereditary illnesses, like hemophilia, are inherited according to clear Mendelian principles. Other traits such as height and body habitus, basic intellectual endowment and physical coordination are much more plastic and less directly dependent on our DNA. If a mother has good nutrition and a secure environment and if she can avoid toxins, both chemical and biological, her developing fetus is helped to reach its maximum genetically conditioned potential. On the other hand fetal exposure to the Rubella virus, excessive amounts of alcohol or insufficient nutrients results in a variety of well known distortions of development. For example the fetal alcohol syndrome is one of the most preventable causes of mental retardation. This knowledge has led to the warning labels now seen on alcoholic beverage containers.

The foregoing may seem self-evident and irrelevant to a discussion of psycho-sexual maturity. Not so. That we are "earthen vessels" is not just a scriptural metaphor. Our human existence is an embodied existence. How we begin, how we grow and how we mature is intimately bound up with amino acids and hormones, with muscle and bone and with the transmission lines and relay points of an integrating nervous system. If maturation involves an increasing awareness and acceptance of what and who we are we have to know that our biology is part of the package.

Psychological

For us humans our psychological development can hardly be considered apart from the social context in which we live from birth onward. Our earliest awareness involves the registering of need and tension states—hunger, cold, dampness and so forth. The relieving of those need and tension states is associated with primary care givers and how they feel, sound and smell. At two to three months we may smile when the configuration of a human face enters our field of vision. By seven or eight months we may be able to distinguish familiar faces from unknown ones, the former evoking our smile, the latter a degree of discomfort and perhaps a cry of fear. In simplest outline these might be our earliest glimmerings of a sense of self in a world of others.

Even the "barest bones" birth announcement invariably describes the sex assignment of the newborn. It's a boy! It's a girl! The newborn is not very reflective on these matters and has more immediate concerns such as warmth, a cradling environment and food. But that gender assignment is crucial and ushers in a long training process. Parents and immediate family are the conveyors of an enormous quantity of cultural values, assumptions and expectations about maleness and femaleness.

One of the robust verities of psychological life is the way good treatment makes us value ourselves and bad treatment makes us disparage ourselves. The beaten child comes to see itself as evil. At times the image of self is so damaged that a life time of being cared for doesn't seem to correct it. The earliest appreciation and valuing of our maleness or femaleness derives from how our gender is seen by our primary caregivers. Their view is of course heavily weighted by cultural factors.

Between the age of two and three we usually come to an accurate and enduring identification of our gender. This knowledge isn't limited to the simple fact of being a boy or girl but encompasses some awareness of gender role behaviors, for example, physical appearance and movement, dress, mannerisms, speech, emotional responsiveness and agressivity. Gender role identity continues to develop well into adult life.

In the happiest situation our gender assignment is one that those who care for us value and appreciate. They want a girl, they want a boy. Moreover they attach an unambivalent sense of worth to femaleness or maleness. Needless to say the momentum for growth in self-esteem is significantly enhanced when something about ourselves which is known so early has a positive connotation.

Social

The interplay between a society or culture and the individuals that comprise it is examined and speculated on in a vast body of literature. Erik Erikson in "Childhood and Society" developed one theoretical model which has great coherence and has stood up well over time. Even if the process is not fully understood we do know that baby Eskimos, Hindus and New Yorkers grow up as identifiable members of their respective cultural groups. Each culture typically features substantial physical similarity but that does not appear essential to the acculturation process. Attitudes, patterns of behavior, societal roles and even dietary customs seem to be learned quite readily even by those adopted in infancy into a totally alien culture.

At some point in our development we should be able to appreciate that who we are as social beings has a great deal to do with contingency—the luck of the draw. This awareness may temper pride over opportunities we've been given. Ideally the awareness will foster a sense of sympathetic commonality with those maturing in less advantaged situations.

Spiritual

As Catholic Christians we believe in a reality beyond that immediately accessible to our senses. The preceding discussion, brief as it is, is essentially descriptive. It does not touch on the enduring existential questions of mankind such as Why am I here? Who am I with? What should I do and what will happen to me? Nonetheless, our theology teaches us that grace builds on nature. If we want to embrace that formative grace it might be helpful to know as much as we can about our nature. If God, in the person of Jesus, embraced our human nature who are we to disparage it? Why not accept our humanness and its mysterious thrust toward maturation with gratitude just because it gives each of us a personal opportunity to see the Spirit at work?

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AS A PROCESS

Time Sequencing

A clever television ad for a nationally marketed bread showed images of one growing child superimposed one on the other. The progression was from pre-school to late adolescence. Clearly human development is a process that extends over time. Buried behind the obvious are features that may not be self-evident. These include some aspects of pre-natal development, time sequencing and the occurrence of critical periods, the need for balance in development and the effects of trauma and disruptions on the development process.

Embryologically we all begin as females. Around the 7th week of gestation the presence of the "Y" or male sex chromosome leads to gonadal differentiation. The primitive germ cells differentiate into testes which begin producing androgens. These in turn produce several effects including the male morphology of the genitalia, increased asymmetry of the brain and a male pattern of neuron (brain cell) number, size and type of connection. Exposure of a genetically female fetus to androgens leads to the same type of differentiation which is not reversed when the exposure is removed. This is an example of how critical time-sequencing can be.

A major problem for premature infants is adequate respiration. To assist them oxygen is given. Too much oxygen leads to a growth of fibrous tissue behind the eye lens. In such a state visual stimuli do not reach the occipital cortex at the back of the brain. The absence of such stimuli prevents the proper development of that brain region. If the vision blocking fibrous tissue is not recognized and removed before a certain time the child will be blind. There is a time window of opportunity for vision to develop properly.

Some tragic accidents of nature where small children were kept in extreme social isolation suggest that language acquisition may depend, at least partially, on adequate exposure to speech during a critical period.

Psychological and anthropological studies show that all societies recognize that their developing members become ready for new experiences and the development of new skills at particular ages. Many Bantu cultures have a tradition of "circumcision schools" which mark a formal initiation into adult status. Our own sacramental practice places readiness for first confession and communion at age 7 or 8 while confirmation is delayed until adolescence.

Balance

In addition to the time-sequencing aspect of human development we have an innate awareness of the importance of balance. Times of activity and practice must alternate with periods of rest and consolidation. Attention and concentration can't be sustained indefinitely. Further along in life we learn that time alone, balanced with time in company with others, enhances the appreciation of either state.

Gratification/Deprivation

Psychoanalytic theorists assert that the development of the human person is best facilitated when optimal frustration is balanced with optimal gratification. Not all stress is bad. When what is desired is withheld or delayed a tension is created. The organism moves to relieve that tension. No tension—no movement. Hunger is by definition an uncomfortable state but we can't learn to cope with it if we never experience it.

On the other hand simple conditioning psychology demonstrates that intermittent and irregularly scheduled positive reinforcement is the strongest shaper of behavior. That is, the best way to increase the frequency of a desired behavior is to reward it once in a while. The maturation of the individual is best fostered by a life experience featuring a balance between gratification and deprivation. Too much of the former yields a satiated, spoiled and slothful person. Too little begets a sad, discouraged soul. Similar personality distortions occur if deprivation (frustration) is at the extremes—either overwhelming or non-existent.

Trauma and Discontinuity

Sometimes a particular piece of developmental experience is so unusual or so intense as to deserve the label trauma. Examples might include the death of a parent, divorce, sickness or injury to self or loved one, sudden change in family circumstances, or the emergence of overt family dysfunction such as alcoholism or incest. Sometimes a geographic move can be disruptive particularly if it occurs at a critical phase of development such as the onset of puberty.

For those of us concerned about psychosexual maturation the question is not whether trauma occurred but what effects it had. For one person facing hard times with the support of family may lead to a healthy appreciation of cooperation and loyalty. For someone else the fear of friends being frightened by the belligerence of a drunken father may hinder childhood socialization and leave that person hesitant about investing in friendships.

The ideal resolution of a traumatic experience leaves the individual with some perspective on it. "This happened to me. It made me sad and angry. One of the things that helped me cope was a teacher who was patient with me. This is how I see that time of my life today." In the best situation the individual may even glean something useful from the trial such as empathy for those who have had similar experiences.

More problematic patterns of coping with trauma include repression (no conscious memory of it happening), continued resentment and rage at those viewed as responsible or rigid avoidance of any thing resembling or symbolizing that awful experience. An inability to accept and deal with one's own sexual feelings might be an example of the latter outcome in somebody traumatized by incest.

Perhaps the worst case scenario for the handling of trauma is the formation of a "repetition compulsion." This psychiatric term refers to the repetitive, unconsciously motivated, re-enactment of a situation in the hope of attaining mastery over it. An individual who repeatedly gets in the same type of trouble yet seems incapable of recognizing when he/she is headed that way may be suffering from a repetition compulsion. Such patterned maladaptive behavior is unlikely to change without specific treatment.

In monitoring the process of human maturation one should keep trauma in mind and seek information about its history and its effects. "What are some of the tough things that have happened in your life? How have they affected you?" The depth and credibility of answers to such questions give significant data. It is important that the individual has reached some resolution but also that he grasps the notion that human development is a process that is continuous and at least to some degree, understandable.

In the Eriksonian model the successful negotiation of adolescence leaves one with a sense of identity. This sense of self is hopefully not a conclusion but a relatively stable awareness of who one is at the time. This awareness should include some grasp of one's capacities and limitations, values and desires, affiliations and beliefs. Relatively stable does not mean fixed. A five year old maple tree is relatively stable. Its root system has branched and extended enough to hold it in place against the wind and its leaves produce enough stored energy to promote growth. But it has many years to reach maturation and many cycles of budding, flourishing and dropping its leaves before its life is over.

The maturing person sees the self as an open system. Almost all earthly life is cellular. The health of each cell requires a semi-permeable membrane, a containing boundary that lets things in and out in a free but regulated way. If nothing gets in the cell dies of starvation. If nothing gets out it dies of poisoning. The analogy for psychological health is quite persuasive. A healthy self must be open to input—new information, new experiences. It isn't just a matter of letting the new in. There must be some willingness to be formed by it, to incorporate what is learned into one's sense of self.

Sharing oneself is equally important to psychological health. At times that sharing may be limited as when we give effort and allow others to benefit from what we produce. At other times that sharing may be fuller as when we invest our love in another and commit ourselves to the promotion of their well-being.

In humans the regulation of give and take in relationships involves what psychiatrists call "mechanism of defense." Maybe we are all, to greater or lesser degrees, like the cherry-stone clam which has a tough shell to protect its soft and vulnerable insides. We all have thoughts, wishes, fears, shames, etc. which we think will lead to big problems if another sees them. In the mature individual the array of defenses is varied and flexible. In appropriate circumstances we drop our guard and let another know us more fully. An interesting and sometimes problematic aspect of all of this is the way our defensiveness can block our own awareness of ourselves. Nobody knows themselves fully but the psycho-sexually maturing individual accepts this and cultivates some willingness to grow in self-knowledge. Typically this knowledge is acquired through reflective interaction with others. Is it not the task of those charged with formation and direction to reflect back to the candidate what they see?

Self-esteem is an important quality of one's identity. It is a valuing of oneself, a feeling of worthwhileness. It begins in us with the experience of being valued by another. It is augmented (or diminshed) by our whole relational history and the exercise of our human capacities over a life-time. Our ultimate experience of self-worth is through the grace of faith whereby we see ourself as valuable in God's eyes.

Body image is a component of self-esteem. Some individuals are afflicted by significant distortions in the way they perceive their own bodies. Anorectics commonly see their bodies as "too fat" even when their bones seem to be stretching their skin. Other body image problems can be reflected in disregard or even rather abusive treatment of one's physical self. Appropriate self-care in eating, sleeping, exercising and grooming are all suggestive of a healthy body image.

A maturing self can usually function in a variety of roles. Son, friend, student, team member, faculty member and so forth. Problems in the maturation of the self might be manifested as an over-identification with a particular role. Accepting a role and functioning comfortably in it is one thing but clinging rigidly to it and over valuing it is problematic. A few years ago the movie "The Great Santini" depicted a picture-perfect miliary officer stressing those around him by letting his soldier's role overly influence his function as husband and father.

In our culture the social role of priest is a profound one. Even with the loss of prestige in the last 25 years there is still a"specialness" about the priest as a visible and public person. Some candidates are at risk for over-identification with the role of priest. If one believes that grace builds on nature it seems logical that one's grasp of what it means to be a priest would evolve over a life-time of ministry. A person in first theology who seems to have reached premature closure on his understanding of priesthood raises questions. The first of which would be "Is this candidate's sense of self weakened in some way that requires over-identification with the role of priest?"

This phenomenon of over-identification of self with a role is not at all limited to priests. Policemen, politicians, physicians and parents among hundreds of others might all be subject to such restricted perceptions of themselves. But the issues of religious belief — "Where did I come from? Why am I here and what will happen to me?", being so definitive and profound, can set the stage for a very seductive solution to the painful uncertainties and ambiguities of life.

"I have received the truth and have no further questions." Should we not view with a little skepticism those who, with a limited experience of life, believe they have already grasped most of religious truth?

A red flag is raised by the candidate who not only over-identifies with his self-defined image of priesthood but also seems particularly interested in the externals associated with that image. Our Catholic history is very rich in tradition and symbols. It is appropriate to appreciate, value and honor those symbols including badges of office. But the symbols are not the thing itself and some may need help in acquiring a balanced perspective.

PSYCHOSEXUAL MATURITY AS REFLECTED IN RELATIONSHIPS

How Goes the Process?
Perceiving and Thinking About:

Self

Autonomy, a recognition that somehow we are separate from others, allows us to choose this action over that action, to hold on or let go, to speak or be silent and so forth. Instrumental action, doing something, building something, learning to read and write, all exercise one's autonomy and help us to know our capabilities. Some experiences of failure are needed to keep us realistic in this regard. These developmental phases are pre-conditions for the emergence of a self separate from others and thereby capable of recognizing another person.

Our earliest experience of other persons is usually within the family. How one views one's siblings provides information on a person's development. Is the picture one dimensional or vague, or when one talks about a brother or sister is the portrayal rounded and richer? What experience has one had of childhood friends?

We humans don't just see others. We often have an emotional valence towards them. We like them or dislike them. And beyond that we are capable of valuing other selves. The maturing person should be able to give some information about their relationship history. Whom have they known and, especially, who has been important to them? Who has taken an interest in them and how were they affected by that care?

An Other

Difficulties in relating might be signalled by over-involvement as well as isolation. Never leaving home or excessive sadness when one does raises questions about one's toleration of separateness. In early adolescence infatuation with teachers or idealization of cultural leaders is normal. In later years excessive pre-occupation with an authority figure can point to a damaged sense of self that is hard to value apart from its attachment to the favored one. This process is one aspect of the development of cults, formal or informal, where each member's self-worth is enhanced by their association with the "leader."

Naturally, it has to be recognized that appetite for relationships has great variability. The ideal is not unrelenting gregariousness for everyone. More appropriate is some awareness and comfort with one's own sociability. Having said that one would hope to see some appreciation that relating is a process and relationships grow when there is interest and effort applied.

All The Rest

At various points in life we find ourselves relating to whole groups of people such as our classmates, our co-workers or our parish. Such large group affiliations can be distorted by prejudice. Prejudice is based on projection. Projection is a mechanism of defense in which what is unacceptable in the self, be it wish, impulse or characteristic, is seen as residing in another. Those too quick or too intense in assigning negative judgments to whole classes of people usually need to do some work on themselves. Just about any collection of "others" can be viewed prejudicially; the old, the young, men, women, the foreign, the ethnically or sexually diverse. We all have prejudices. We need to support one another in identifying them and we need the courage to look into ourselves to find their roots.

Emotional Life—Antipathies—Angers—Affections—Sexuality

Psycho-sexual development leads to adaptive management of our emotional life, our feelings. The brain circuitry that underlies the generation, perception and modulation of feelings is complex and only partially understood. In broadest outline it is a layered arrangement with arousal and emotional reactivity coming from lower centers. These feeling states are then processed and modulated by higher brain regions. In man the cerebral cortex has a lot of inhibitory function. Thus injury to the cortex often leads to "release" phenomena such as impulsive acts, rage or excessive crying. Less complex organisms, such as lizards, don't have much of a cortex so when they're angry they're angry and when they're not they're not. Processed forms of anger such as sarcasm and passive-aggressive maneuvers are not a problem for lizards.

As infants our cerebral cortex is undeveloped and our emotional regulation is largely a matter of "on or off" depending on a rough read of our bodily sense receptors. There is rapid growth of the brain in the first few years of life and then things quiet down quite a bit. Then the hormonal tidal wave of puberty drives a great deal of emotional activation and some reprogramming of the managing mechanisms is necessary.

One of the emotional states we all have to cope with is anger. Anger is a universal human response to loss. Those who doubt this may try taking a bottle away from a one year old. Each of us has our own history of loss so we all share some experience of managing our anger.

In addition to feeling anger when we lose something it is also common to feel anger when we are threatened. The physiologic changes in our brains and bodies are quite similar when we are angered and when we are fearful. From an evolutionary perspective it is easy to see how this is adaptive. For some the shift from fear to anger is so quick that the fear element is not even recognized. In those who are chronically or excessively angry, discovering and dealing with the fear that underlies it may be healing.

Human emotional life has a cyclical quality, an ebb and flow. If the flow is unduly impeded it tends to build up. Thus in dealing with anger, the safer course is to channel its expression rather than to deny it. At some point we have to let it go. If we don't, it either builds up to intolerable and explosive levels or it is driven underground into smoldering resentments. Other examples of poorly managed anger would be its unmodulated and vicious release, its fueling of passive-aggressive behavior, or its deflection against the self, producing depression.

For those of us in helping professions, like education, health care or the ministry, there is often something unseemly about anger and aggressiveness. Yet, if we are human, we have to deal with it, our own as well as the anger of others. Fortunately the help we need in this area is recognized. Readings and workshops are available. An argument could be made for an experiential workshop on dealing with anger being a required part of a seminarian's curriculum.

Our antipathies, our anger, are not the only part of our emotional life that we learn to manage. It is the same with our affections. Liking, enjoying, nurturing and comforting one another are all things we learn to do, hopefully to the benefit of all, including ourselves. Recognizing and managing sexual feelings is a long-term, probably life-long, process. Our gender identity is acknowledged in early childhood and some sexual feelings are noticed before and during grade school. For most people managing those feelings is not too difficult and a little guidance and understanding from caretakers is a great help. If these early feelings and curiosity behaviors are harshly treated our early management program is skewed by excessive guilt and repression. If, on the other hand, we are overstimulated, as in sexual abuse situations, erotic feelings may take on an exaggerated importance and become a pre-occupation. Neither extreme positions us well to deal with the intensified erotic feelings of puberty.

Scientific understanding of human sexuality has only developed recently and remains woefully incomplete. The biologic basis of gender differentiation, that is, its dependence on the X and Y chromosomes, was only discovered in 1902. Pioneer studies by Kinsey, Masters and Johnson and John Money began in the 1950's, 60's and 70's. What is known is essentially descriptive and not really explanatory.

The ethological perspective is of some help. Ethology is the scientific study of animal behavior. As a general principle the higher an organism is on the evolutionary tree the greater the plasticity (variability) of post-natal development, including that of sexual behavior. Lower species are pre-natally programmed and hormonally controlled. Perversions are not a problem for salamanders. When the signal is on they do their thing and then go back to eating bugs. For primates, like us, sexual behavior patterns seem to be pre-natally primed and post-natally completed. Immature monkeys can be observed to engage in sexual rehearsal play. Moreover, at least for some species, the absence of such play seems to impair adult competency.

For us humans, recognizing and managing sexual feelings is a long and complicated process. The process is heavily influenced by broad cultural values and norms as well as our own personal experience. In addition to life events, that experience includes our own hormonal metabolism, nutritional history, exposure to alcohol or other chemicals, tactile stimulation and physical health.

Our current level of scientific understanding posits that what excites and satisfies our sexual feelings is a matter of discovery not choice. Several lines of evidence point to a role for pre-natal influences on what will become our sexual object preference. Other data identifies childhood and adolescent experiences as powerful influences on the final elaboration of our "love map," an expression used by Professor John Money of Johns Hopkins University.

The modal outcome of all that is included in the process is for an individual to have sexual interest in an opposite sex partner of roughly the same age. This outcome has clear adaptational value for the species and for the individual. It is equally clear that for a significant number of individuals the outcome is different.

For those who end up having a strong sexual attraction to same sex partners it is not uncommon to have some inkling of "difference" even before puberty. Individuals experience this sense of being different in varied ways. For some it is a minor divergence of interests that may limit their friendships a little. For others it occasions intense self-doubt and hesitancy which may seriously distort their maturation. It is quite rare for the individual to experience this sense of being different in a positive way.

In adolescence when increasing interest in those of the other sex is normative, the individual with an early awareness of interest in same sex partners may cope in several ways. They may suppress what they know about themselves and fake interest in others, indulging what heterosexual interest they may have. Some make a friend of the opposite sex and just ignore the absence of erotic interest. Still others withdraw from the dating arena. It seems quite rare for a teenager to be open with peers about their erotic interest in same sex individuals.

In the light of recent anguish over the sexual behavior problems of some priests it is essential that seminarians be supported in a reflective examination of their own sexual development. Even though scientific knowledge of psycho-sexual maturation is inadequate they can be taught what is known. They should be encouraged to share with some responsible other the history of their sexual experience. Being sexually abused as a child is a risk factor for developing abusive behavior in adult life. Our present state of knowledge would make it unjust to frame such an experience as disqualifying for seminary training but an individual with such a personal history needs to have some grasp on how he has resolved that trauma.

INTERPERSONAL AND RELATIONAL

Whom Do you Carry with You? To Whom and How Do You Relate Today?

Subordinates

The behaviors we exhibit in relationships reflect our attitudes about those relationships. Those attitudes typically vary if we are relating to subordinates, peers or authority figures. Ideally, we can manage all three with some balance and comfort.

To those junior to us in age, organizational status or some other dimension we owe some care and respect for their dignity. We may actually bear some specific responsibility for them if the relationship is teacher-student, counselor-counselee, parent-child, etc. Abuse of the power inherent in such relationships is a tip off to distorted development in the abuser. A weakened sense of self can be masked by an exaggerated need to control. For some the reassurance of being "in charge" is greatly preferred over the give and take of more equal relationships.

Peers

The quality of one's peer relationships says a lot about how we are doing in our own development. Poor peer relationships are often found in those suffering a variety of behavior disorders, particularly sexual ones. The valuing of others, including an appreciation of their companionship, is a precondition for building relationships. "Building relationships" is apt terminology. The expenditure of time, energy and attention is required.

Among the signs of difficulty in peer relationships would be extraordinary shyness, exaggerated competitiveness and jealous exclusivity. In the first year of life we develop the capacity to distinguish familiar faces from unfamiliar ones. Seeing the latter evokes a degree of tension that ranges from minor nervousness to great fear. Perhaps that discomfort with meeting the new never goes away completely but for most of us it diminishes enough so we have some willingness to greet the stranger.

When a group of people are drawn together for any reason some effort is usually spent in sorting out relative status. Maybe it is part of our mammalian heritage or maybe its some behavioral echo of sibling rivalry. In any case competition happens. For some, it keeps happening again and again, even to the exclusion of other useful patterns of relating, such as supporting, cooperating, entertaining and so forth. Competition surely has its value but if our only posture towards our peers is in the form of a contest something is missing in us.

Exclusivity of relationships is probably an anxiety management device. It is normal to prefer the company of some over others but if preference becomes possessiveness some inner reassurance is probably being served. A clique probably serves a similar function. The emphasis seems to be more on the exclusion of the unwanted than the pleasure of being together. These illustrations are in the extreme to make a point. They share a feature which is a tendency towards closure and restriction and away from the openness characteristic of psychological health.

Authorities

The third way relationships can be oriented is towards authority figures. We all begin as pretty helpless and vulnerable. A number of people, beginning with our parents and siblings, give us what we need and in that giving have power over us. Each of us has a history of dealing with power figures that shapes our current way of relating to the authorities in our lives. Problems are suggested when our attitudes toward authorities become rigid, stereotyped and unaffected by more contemporary experience.

A few might have an unrealistic expectation that "the boss", be he/she rector, teacher, spiritual director, etc. will anticipate and provide for all of our needs. More commonly those with unhappy early experiences with authority will bring to current relationships a baggage of distrust, fear or antagonism. It's a bit curious how ready we are to reflect on how we are treated than on what kind of authority we are for those who count on us. Maybe this has something to do with Jesus' appreciation of the centurion who came to Him for help. He clearly stated his perspective that authority went down as well as up.

Given the hierarchical nature of the church it seems prudent to offer something to candidates for religious life that will help them grasp their own biases around authority issues.

Acceptance is necessary. There will always be bosses. They have a job to do. It is reasonable to expect fairness in how I'm treated. If I believe that, I will be free to make my needs and limitations known.

THE CAPACITIES OF ADULTHOOD—BUILT ON AUTONOMY

Intimacy

How is the psycho-sexual health of the individual emerging into young adulthood to be recognized? One measure might be the presence, at least in beginning form, of what can be called the capacities of adulthood: intimacy, generativity and integrity. The last two may not be very apparent nor is this cause for alarm because their cultivation occurs over a lifetime. Perhaps it should be clarified that "integrity" in the Eriksonian sense does not mean personal truthfulness and adherence to a stable set of values but more a perspective on one's life in its entirety, seeing it as a whole and being at some peace with what is seen. Obviously one does not reach this perspective in one's twenties. On the other hand it is reasonable to expect the young adult to show some ability to be intimate.

Intimacy does not equate to physical proximity. One can be standing in a very crowded elevator or even in an embrace with an anonymous sexual partner and not be intimate in the real human meaning of this term. On the other hand long standing friends can be sharing profoundly personal news over a telephone circuit stretching between continents and experience a deep moment of intimacy.

Human intimacy has something to do with knowing and being known by another human person.

In biology the "intima" is the innermost layer of a blood vessel or organ. Intimacy occurs when our insides, the linings of our selves, are revealed to another. A capacity for intimacy is a feature of psycho-sexual maturity. It presupposes autonomy. Losing oneself in another, as in infatuation, or in the exaggerated trust of a "guru" figure may be a kind of closeness but it is not intimacy. To share something personal and deep in one's self implies a "self" that is not clouded or lost in the sharing.

One hallmark of the ability to be intimate is a willingness to disclose. "Tell me about yourself." is an invitation to intimacy. "What was it like for you?" is another. Such questions can be answered from many levels and how one responds depends on a wide array of factors not the least of which are the assumptions about the relationship between the asker and the one asked: novice master and novice, dean of students and freshmen, therapist and patient, strangers on a train and so forth.

If there is a presumption of trust and an appropriateness for the inquirer to pose such a question, then the level of response is some indicator of one's willingness to disclose. If one gives only his social security number at one extreme or immediately speaks of his deepest experience of humiliation or shame at another, a problem in the realm of disclosure is apparent. Clearly, most of us are somewhere in between these extremes but hopefully, when asked such questions, we can share something true about ourselves that we consider important.

We build trust by trusting and in normal circumstances the growth of trust facilitates disclosure. Difficulties might be suspected when disclosure is narrow and restricted to only a few categories of information such as one's achievements, one's opinions or even one's history of personal hurt and trauma. What we tell each other about ourselves naturally varies with the circumstances in which the telling occurs as well as with the nature and history of the relationship. But as Harry Stack Sullivan, a great American psychiatrist once said "We are all much more simply human than otherwise." Thus we all have experiences of success and failure, hope and fear, joy and sadness, attraction and distaste. If there is no sharing from any of these major realms of personal experience then some developmental arrest or at least unevenness can be implied.

This discussion has focussed on disclosing and it needs to be said that maturity includes a matching readiness to receive disclosure. The narcissist, and sometimes the very lonely, may talk endlessly about themselves but not show much willingness to listen. At another extreme the "perfect listener" may be using attentiveness as a way of protecting their innermost selves. Once again balance and symmetry emerge as features of healthy maturation.

Generativity

Generativity in the strict biological sense refers to the begetting and nurturing of offspring. It has other meanings in the broader context of human culture. One meaning would be a certain comfort and consistency in productiveness. Happiness in one's work leads to the results of one's toil having benefits beyond simple biologic survival of self and progeny. We become attentive and concerned about what is beyond ourselves—be it community, the church, humankind. For the vast majority of us this contribution to the common good is made fairly close to home—to our relatives, co-workers, local community and so forth. Additionally, our generativity can get compromised by anxieties, personal needfulness and regressive pulls.

The healthy productiveness and nurturance of others which are hallmarks of generativity should not be confused with workaholic traits or co-dependency. People who overwork to cover painful questions of self-worth can be enormously productive. Not uncommonly though, in mid-life and just beyond, waning physical capacities set the stage for a psychological crash-landing. Anger, resentment and disillusionment are often the flames around the wreckage.

In a similar cautionary way the expenditure of self for the good of others seems to work best when it flows out of a sense of graced abundance. Jesus' command to love others as ourselves is rather pointless if we do not feel ourselves as loveable. In ministry as in any emotionally charged relationship the need to give, if it is compensatory, puts pressure on the recipient of our largesse. Such giving does not delight in the maturation and development of the one given to. Their no longer needing us can be felt as deflating. The classic example of this type of "selfless giving" is the spouse of the alcoholic who takes up more and more daily responsibility for family affairs. Then when the alcoholic heals sufficiently the spouse no longer feels as needed and leaves the marriage.

This distinction between generativity and compensatory overwork has great relevance for the life of the minister. The former delights in the working of grace as the flock matures spiritually. The latter is made nervous as his role of leader becomes less critical and initiatives are taken by individual parishioners. John the Baptist seemed to have a handle on this when he said "He must increase and I must decrease."

Integrity

The generative life prepares us for a stage of integrity. For the candidate this is not so much a current concern but a hoped for capacity that might provide some encouragement and direction for current efforts. The happiest outcome of life's developmental arc is coming to acceptance of the gift of our life as we have lived it. Preparation for this state is facilitated by knowing that in some fundamental sense all that we have, and have had, has been given to us. One of those gifts is the capacity to work with what comes our way, take some of it inside and make decisions about how to respond. Honesty makes us recognize that some of those decisions were poor ones and others more wise and generous. Integrity features forbearance and forgiveness. We see some completeness in the playing out of our life issues and we accept that other life tasks may be undone. Regrets and resentments fade as we own some participation in the process Walker Percy refers to when he says "we pass each other on."

PROGRESS NOT PERFECTION

Self-acceptance Versus Narcissism

For those who must make some judgment about the psycho-sexual maturity of another it is best to look for progress not perfection. As persons we are open systems. We must be mature (developed) enough to deal with input—to take in information and experience, process it and, when suitable, let ourselves be formed by it.

This openness presupposes a certain level of self-knowledge and self-acceptance. Self-acceptance is not narcissism. Their difference is revealed in communication patterns. The self-accepting individual demonstrates a balance between disclosure and listening. There is a readiness to hear as well as share. In addition what is shared is itself balanced with acknowledgement of strengths and weaknesses, accomplishments and failures.

Curiosity

One would hope to see some curiosity. Not a search for the novel for its own sake but a readiness to consider the new. Such curiosity is healthiest when it reflects a patience with the incompleteness and tentativeness of what is already known.

Happiness—Capacity to Enjoy

Some pleasure in surprises is one manifestation of happiness or a capacity to enjoy. Depression is almost by definition a pleasure killer. It is also a psychiatric diagnosis that may need specific treatment. But happiness can also be diminished by the grimness of personal certitude. Appreciation of both things and persons is enhanced when we admit that our "here and now" is a gift of God best accepted with humility.

Dealing with Crisis, Conflict Resolution

Healthy openness implies a certain flexibility. In the physical world, a strong structure is flexible not rigid. Such flexibility is best seen at times of crisis or sudden challenge. Such challenges may be personal (failure, loss, sickness), interpersonal (anger, rejection) or institutional (distress in the social situation where we live or work).

Such challenges often require us to adjust:

- Can we take in new information?
- Can we ask for help?
- Do we have some belief and trust in our own convictions and values?
- Do we have some confidence in our own capacities?
- Can we negotiate and compromise?

Dealing with a challenge by dismissal of the challenger or other forms of avoidance may make us transiently more comfortable but growth is precluded. Behaviors or attitudes that preclude growth may be more than mere personality glitches in those who aspire to ordained ministry.

IT AIN'T OVER 'TIL IT'S OVER

Openness

Scripture, both Old Testament and New, features a prominent and recurrent theme, the call to change, the call to conversion. And it isn't just the young adults in the sacred texts who are given this invitation. Psychosexual maturation is a process not a prize. The process is life-long. There is evidence that human brain cells continue to branch and make new connections into the 7th and 8th decades of life. Perhaps this is part of the biologic basis for a grandparent's wisdom.

The Willingness To Grow

Candidates for priesthood need to accept that their life is a developmental process. There may be times of rapid growth, no growth or even regression but the potential for growth must not be denied. The presence of this perspective is evidenced by candidates recognizing their own developmental experiences; those which promoted growth and those which hindered it. The absence of this important perspective is suspected when one sees fearfulness, narrowness, restriction, smugness and intellectual, emotional and spiritual closure.

Certain aspects of ministry are overtly process oriented. Sacramental preparation, the flow of the liturgical year and various renewal activities are examples. The RCIA may be the most obvious example of the process aspect of ministry. How can candidates understand this and minister effectively if they have no sense of pilgrimage in their own lives?

One's Image of God

The pilgrim is recognized by his continued openness. He has a willingness to listen, to entertain alternative points of view and even to acquire new skills. It is presumptuous to believe that we fully experience God and He cannot further reveal Himself to us. If on the other hand we believe that through prayer and our life's experience we can know Him better, shouldn't the God we know in our 60's and 70's be different from the God we knew in our 20's and 30's?

In the matter of psycho-sexual maturation we can apply the earthly wisdom of Yogi Berra, "It ain't over 'til it's over."

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Addictions

by J. G. Sehner, S.J.

❧ Addiction is a commonplace problem in contemporary American society. In fact, it is estimated that addiction in one form or another affects as high as one-fourth of the population of the United States. A very large number of addiction research studies, both specialized and popular, underlines the presence of this problem behavior in our everyday life.[1]

This chapter will give a brief description of addiction in its various forms, and then discuss the complex process that underlies these addictions. It will then review the assessment of addiction in candidates and seminarians by both the vocation counselor and by the professional psychologist. In the concluding section there will be a discussion of various intervention possibilities.

WHAT ARE ADDICTIONS?

Addictive behavior exists along a continuum that runs from the normal *use* of substances and involvement in relationships, to their *abuse*, and finally to *addiction* to a substance or a relationship. While we should keep in mind that abuse of a substance or relationship can also be a serious problem, and in some cases lead to an addiction, in this chapter we shall concentrate on addictions.

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Over the past 50 years research on addictions has yielded a variety of definitions. Contemporary ones range from descriptions that describe addiction as a failure in moral behavior:

> An addiction exists when a person's attachment to a sensation, an object, or another person is such as to lessen his appreciation of and ability to deal with other things in his environment, or in himself, so that he has become increasingly dependent on that experience as his only source of gratification.[2]

to those which characterize addiction as a type of disease:

> Addiction is the repeated use of a substance and/or a compelling involvement in a behavior that directly or indirectly modifies the internal milieu (as indicated by changes in neurochemical and neuronal activity) in such a way as to produce immediate reinforcement, but whose long-term effects are personally or medically harmful or highly disadvantageous socially.[3]

Addictions are viewed by society as more or less damaging. Addiction to substances such as alcohol and drugs is generally regarded as engaging in socially destructive behavior. To a lesser degree the addiction may be judged to be socially unacceptable behavior as is the case with overeating, gambling, or excessive dependency. Other addictions are to more socially acceptable behaviors such as work, spending money or even religious fanaticism.

Whether the addiction takes the familiar form of alcoholism or of a less familiar one such as an addiction to excessive spending or to religious fanaticism, it is, at least according to the statistics, a part of the experience of many applicants whom a vocation counselor encounters. Any applicant, therefore, may be addicted. Some applicants may not themselves be addicted but come from a family which has been shaped by an addicted parent or grandparent.

The most common form is substance addiction, especially to alcohol. Such addiction is generally socially destructive. Because of its prevalence, alcoholism is probably the addiction that most often will confront the vocation counselor.

Addiction to alcohol is described by the American Psychiatric Association by a list of symptoms and behaviors of psychoactive substance dependence:

- large amounts of the substance taken over longer periods than intended;
- persistent desire;
- an inordinate amount of time spent in acquiring or recovering from the substance;
- frequent intoxication and withdrawal symptoms;
- relinquishment of important activities;
- continued use in spite of negative consequences;
- marked tolerance of the substance;
- withdrawal symptoms;
- substance often taken to reduce withdrawal symptoms.[4]

Although not all symptoms will be evident in every alcoholic, some will always be present.

Many of these effects are due to alcohol's being a sedative drug. Its depressive effect at first relaxes the individual and releases inhibitions, but as more of the substance enters the system, symptoms of depression appear—feelings of hopelessness and helplessness, slower physical movement, slurring of speech, and ultimately unconsciousness.[5]

To complicate the picture alcoholism often is associated with other psychological problems. Drugs are abused in conjunction with alcohol, and may be used either concurrently, or sequentially to help alleviate withdrawal symptoms. Such mixing of substances complicates and worsens the individual's disturbance and makes diagnosis and intervention all the more difficult.[6]

Behaviorally the alcoholic may experience problems such as anxiety, irrational fears or panic, obsessions and compulsions. Depression, itself a psychological disturbance, is often associated with alcoholism. Sociopathic and antisocial types of personality disorders are at times associated with alcohol addiction.[7] Such symptoms complicate the addiction and make intervention more difficult.

There is a great deal of debate about the intricacies of such links, and whether one is dependent upon the other as its cause. A variety of these behaviors, however, might manifest themselves in an alcoholic. The manipulative behavior of the sociopath is a special difficulty. Such a person may be most charming and engaging in his self-presentation, and seem, because of this behavior, to be a model person. His manipulate behavior can skillfully cloak the influence of the addiction on his life.

As alcoholism develops over time the alcoholic will suffer the effects of progressively worsening functioning in a variety of areas:

- judgment will be impaired;
- emotions will become unpredictable;
- the alcoholic may begin to act in an excessively aggressive or amorous manner;
- both social and occupational skills will be impaired.

In addition to alcohol addiction, substance addiction also exists with a variety of drugs ranging from sedatives and hypnotics, to opioids, hallucinogens and cocaine. Like alcohol each has its own symptoms and behaviors, and each may be used in conjunction with alcohol. Drug addicts may exhibit common behaviors like impulsivity especially in self-damaging ways, low inhibition and a search for immediate "highs."[8] The picture is further complicated by behaviors resulting from new forms of these drugs and synthetic drugs. The vocation counselor may need to consult a drug expert to help sort out the addiction of a specific individual.

In the area of socially unacceptable but not destructive addictions a person can be addicted to food. This type of addiction tends to be more prevalent in women than in men. Generally the addiction is to both eating and dieting. Food addicts experience an "appetite for food which they or others judge to be excessive and which leads to self-initiated attempts at behavioral control or to recommendation for restraint from others."[9] Eating can take the form of food binges. Such behavior is preceded by a build up of tension and followed by a feeling of well-being. Guilt and feelings of self-blame follow, and can lead to a new session of binging. The food addict finds it very difficult to refrain from eating and may become agitated if he is unable to binge.

Gambling can also be addictive. The American Psychiatric Association describes addictive gambling as

> a chronic and progressive failure to resist impulses to gamble, and gambling behavior that compromises, disrupts, or damages the gambler's personal life, family, or vocational pursuits.[10]

From evidence of demographic surveys addicted gamblers are most likely to be white males under the age of 30 years, often the age group of seminary candidates. Nearly half of the pathological gamblers surveyed came from families in which one or both parents were active gamblers.[11]

Involvement in gambling tends gradually to increase both in its frequency and in the quantity wagered. The addict is preoccupied with winning and the excitement generated by tension build-up and release in the process of doing so. When he cannot gamble, the addicted gambler experiences anxiety similar to withdrawal in a substance addict. As in the case of substance addiction, the gambler can also suffer from other psychological disorders, e.g., anxiety, depression and sociopathic behavior.[12]

An individual can also become addicted to relationships or patterns of relationships, at times sexually, in a manner that is socially unacceptable. Such addiction to a relationship with persons alters the addict's life to the degree that it destroys all other relationships.

In addictive love relationships another person becomes needed in such an absorbing way, often to the point of survival, that perception and judgment become impaired. In such addictions there is:

- a loss of personal autonomy and self-worth;
- a failure to maintain other interests and relationships integrated with the relationship;
- jealousy and possessiveness;
- a lack of friendship between the lovers.[13]

The boundaries of self between two individuals no longer exist. It is as if the addicted individual lives through the other person. He experiences great anxiety if this relationship is in any way threatened. Such relationships are personally stultifying in their demand for sameness and continuity and result in a paralysis of interpersonal relations. This can be psychologically as detrimental to an individual and the circle of people he lives with as any substance addiction. When such a dependent relationship is ended, the result can be a panicky and compulsive searching for a comparable new relationship. The relationship addict suffers painful withdrawal symptoms, and looks for a new relationship to take away the pain.

Because of its communal aspect seminary life might seem to such an addicted individual to be an ideal source of individuals who will respond to his needs. The addiction as acted out within a seminary community is a difficult one to deal with. Often there is no concrete behavior such as drinking or drug taking to fasten upon, just the addict's demand for unconditional support and affection. The results are none the less destructive to the community's life.

More narrowly within the context of a addictive relationship, a person can be addicted to sexual behavior. This can involve the use of pornography or prostitutes, the sexual abuse of children (of which pedophilia is a special case), and a variety of other sexual behaviors. Like the alcoholic or the drug addict this behavior seems impossible to break, and failure to achieve sexual stimulation results in withdrawal effects. Thus an "addiction cycle" is set up: a trance-like obsession with sexual behavior which is not satisfying and which leads to further sexual behavior and ultimately to despair.[14]

In the area of more socially acceptable behavior work can become the object of addiction. Work like alcohol or drugs can cause a mood change and become exhilarating. Workaholism is described as a need "for external confirmation through status, position, and materialism."[15] For the workaholic work becomes an obsession with the accompanying effects of detachment from day-to-day life and ensuing loneliness. Relationships in the addict's life are affected detrimentally. In a sense work becomes a substitute for loving, reciprocal relationships with other persons. Intimacy with work substitutes for intimacy with people.[16]

Another socially acceptable behavior that can become an addiction is spending money or shopping.

> The distinction between compulsive shopping and the occasional shopping 'spree' is that compulsive shopping represents an attempt at affect regulation, especially to remedy depression and emptiness and is a chronic pattern.[17]

Addictive shopping can serve as an escape for an individual parallel to that provided by alcohol or drugs. The addict is unable to resist visiting shopping malls and department stores, and buys extraordinary quantities of goods without any need. Failing to spend leads to feelings of anxiety and unrest until goods are purchased. Once a variety of merchandise has been bought, there is a feeling of well being, followed by feelings of guilt and self-blame which leads to more compulsive shopping. Although such an addiction might be much more difficult to decipher in a candidate, it could have serious consequences within a seminary context.

Since religion and religious behavior are central themes to be assessed in a candidate, it would seem that an awareness of unhealthy religiosity ought to be of prime concern to the vocation counselor. Religion can also be addictive:

> using God, a church, or a belief system as an escape from reality, in an attempt to find or elevate a sense of self-worth or well-being. . . . the ultimate form of codependency.[18]

Such dependence and control might be seen as an extension to the Transcendent of relational dependence.

There is a progressive development of religious addiction beginning with an ordinary religious lifestyle, and progressing to excessive and compulsive behavior and loss of control that takes on the form of fanaticism. Relationships, problem solving, and everyday life are filtered through religious lenses. Other people become legitimate targets either for conversion or condemnation. Religious addiction then is

> any abuse of overuse, in word or deed, of the deity and of religious ideals or values that control or are controlled by an individual's rigid and unbending behavior, and make that individual want to control others by imposing these values on them and/or requiring others who depend on him or her to exhibit absolute conformity to his or her beliefs.[19]

Like other addictions the results involve a loss of ability to function on the personal or social level.

One might ask if the attributing of the dynamics of addiction to such behaviors as shopping and religious devotion is appropriate. Are such behaviors comparable to substance addiction, gambling and sexual acting out that are recognized as addictions? In response it might be helpful to distinguish between the object of an addiction and the addictive process: "It is this process, along with its multidimensional determinants, that is comparable across different objects of addiction."[20]

Some psychologists have wondered if this process can be identified as a basic "addictive personality," related to antisocial personality disorder or to clinical depression. The identification of such a personality constellation would be very helpful in predicting behavior. Such a personality disorder, however, cannot be demonstrated by psychologists.[21] Antisocial acting out and depression appear to be consequences of addiction, or concomitant to it rather than explanatory causes.

WHAT CAUSES ADDICTIONS?

Is addiction genetically/physiologically based or is addiction generated by the family or by society during a person's development? The answers to these questions are complex, and a full exposition of the research on this question is beyond the scope of this chapter. A brief exploration of the hypothesized causes of addiction is necessary, however, to help us understand the assessment process to be discussed in the next section.

Several researchers have gathered evidence from family studies and surveys that suggests that at least some forms of alcoholism and drug addiction have their origin in the genetic make-up of an individual. For example one researcher found that

> Genetic research . . . indicates that the malfunction begins in the gene. Psychological and sociological research indicates that the environment can trigger, worsen, or to some degree alleviate the genetic predisposition, but the determining factors are biogenetic and biochemical.[22]

It is thought that the genetic pattern may set up vulnerability to addiction within the reward center of the brain. Such a theory furnishes the basis for describing addiction as a "disease."

Other researchers describe addiction as environmentally caused. One such approach is that of Baumeister. He sees addiction as one of the means of escaping from "the self" which he describes as one's physical being given meaning. This meaning is gained from the environment: first from the family, and then from all the other spheres in which a person lives—friends, school, church, organizations. Within this interpersonal environment each "self" has a need to belong and to exercise control.[23]

For Baumeister the addict sees himself as negative, powerless, and loveless because of negative or destructive relationships within his environment. The addict attempts to find relief from the stress of maintaining a positive self in the face of negative relationships by escaping from this negative self and avoiding negative thoughts about the self, losing himself in a form of euphoria. In the process of carrying out this escape the person "unmakes" the self, strips away all the meanings that have been given. Baumeister illustrates his theory by discussing how this can be accomplished by alcoholism, excessive eating and religious fanaticism. Each enables the addict to escape his self.

A special case of the negative influence on the self leading to addiction is that of the alcoholic family, and the "adult children of alcoholics" (ACOA).[24] This concept is also applied to the children of parents with other forms of addiction. The parent's addictive behavior shapes a child's self-image, and the child learns to manipulate or submit to his environment depending upon the demands of the addictive parent(s). In the process the child himself may also become an addict.

The lives of these adult children seem to be governed by rules that have resulted from their parent's addictive behavior:

- the rule of rigidity,
- the rule of silence,
- the rule of denial,
- the rule of isolation.[25]

These rules insure that the addictive behavior does not become public knowledge. At the same time, however, they set up the adult child for maladaptive behaviors, and possibly for his own addiction.

Adult children can take on a variety of roles in the family, dependent upon the age at which they encounter the effects of parental addiction. For example the adult child whose parent is addicted from his early childhood may take on the role of the "hero." This adult child is highly responsible, needs to prove himself by many accomplishments, is overly controlling, has leadership qualities, and is perfectionistic. Such an adult child might seem to be a prime candidate for the seminary, but in fact is at risk for addiction or a dysfunctional life style.[26] Another role often taken on during adolescence by the adult child is that of the "hypermature person:" extremely serious, self-critical, possessing emotional control and evincing an austere life-style. Again such a person might seem like an ideal candidate.[27]

What becomes clear in reviewing the causes of addiction is that genetic/physiological causes have to operate within an environment, and that environmental causes need a specific genetically produced organism in which to operate. The cause of addiction generally lies in this mixture of the physical constitution and the milieu of any individual. In other words causation is *biopsychosocial*, a dynamic interaction of the genetic/physiological, the psychological and social elements of an individual's life so that we have a third definition of addiction which unites our first two:

> an "addiction" is seen as a complex, progressive behavior pattern having biological, psychological, sociological, and behavioral components. What sets this behavior pattern apart from others is the individual's overwhelmingly pathological involvement in or attachment to it, subjective compulsion to continue it, and reduced ability to exert personal control over it.[28]

This definition helps us to see that there is a common process underlying the various forms of addiction. The result is that "addiction is seen as a total experience involving physiological changes in individuals (many of whom may be genetically and/or psychologically predisposed) as these are interpreted and given meaning by the individual within the sociocultural context in which the addictive behavior occurs."[29]

Basic, therefore, to understanding the causes of addiction is an awareness when trying to understand an addict, that there is not just one cause. For some individuals the cause appears to be fundamentally genetic and physiological. For others the family history, or stressful life events point to an environmental source of the addiction. For most addicts the picture is complex and both genetic/physiological constitution and environment must be considered. Addiction to the variety of substances and behaviors discussed in the first section can develop in one person for a very different reason than in another.

A clear example of this complexity is given by Zucker in relation to what he terms "the four alcoholisms." By analyzing a number of epidemiological surveys he was able to distinguish four alcoholisms. The first of these he terms "antisocial alcoholism." Addicts of this type are generally male, come from a family of alcoholic or antisocial parents of the lower social-economic status, have a history of antisocial behavior. They react poorly to intervention.[80]

The second and third types of alcoholism are related to a person's maturing process. Zucker calls the second type "developmentally cumulative." It is found in both males and females coming from moderately disturbed families of all social statuses. This type of addictive behavior begins in adolescence and increases in severity over the life span as the person encounters environmental stress. The third type, called "developmentally limited alcoholism," is parallel to the second, but in this case is generally limited to adolescence and the early adulthood. The resolution of environmental stress through successful career and family roles ends the addiction.

The fourth type, "negative affect alcoholism" is more frequently found in females from families with histories of depression and middle economic status. The use of alcohol begins as an attempt to cope with interpersonal relationships or career pressures.

In the first and fourth type the genetic and physiological factors are more prominent than in the second and third. By analogy we can extend these types to other addictive processes, at least to those with substances as their object, and perhaps to some degree to relationship addictions.

HOW DO WE ASSESS ADDICTIONS?

Now that we have some notion of the varying forms addiction can take, it is easier to make suggestions for screening and assessing candidates, and working with seminarians. The process of screening may be the task of the vocation or personnel director of the seminary, the diocese or the religious community. Assessment implies a more formal process that may need to be carried out by a psychologist or psychiatrist.

In the screening process for candidates it is important for the examiner to inquire about addictive types of behavior. In addition to alcoholism it should be clear that addiction can be to the variety of substances or relationships that were described in the first section. Generally this inquiry will be within the context of an in-depth interview. Although the interviewer may not want to use a formal inst.ument, it may be helpful to have in mind some possible questions drawn from such instruments if the candidate has admitted to addictive behavior or has given the interviewer some reason to suspect an addiction.

For example questions based upon the Michigan Alcoholism Screening Test, one of the best established clinical instruments, can be adapted for use within a screening interview:

- do you feel you are a normal drinker (gambler, eater, shopper, etc.)?
- have you ever been in a hospital because of drinking (drug abuse, etc.)?
- can you stop drinking (gambling, etc.) without a struggle?
- do you ever feel bad about your drinking (binge eating, etc.)?
- do your parents ever worry or complain about your drinking (gambling, etc.)?
- have you ever lost friends or a job because of drinking (drugs, etc.)?[31]

Depending on the answers to such questions the interviewer can explore these areas in more detail. A very important area is the details on the applicant's family:

- is one of the parents, or other members of the family addicted?
- to what are they addicted?
- how long has this been the case?
- what influence has this had on the candidate?

Such questions will help give a broader context to the individual's own possible difficulty with addiction.

Questions which focus on the possibility that the candidate is an Adult Child are also important. Again questions adapted to the interview from more formal assessment instruments can be helpful:

- does he overreact to changes over which he has no control? [rigidity]

- does he avoid conflict or aggravate it but rarely deal with it? [silence]
- does he seek tension and crisis and then complain? [denial]
- does the candidate have difficulty with intimate relationships? [isolation]

Other questions can be addressed to gauge the presence of fear, shame and guilt, despair, anger and confusion.[32]

Through such general questioning during the interview the vocation counselor will be able to obtain an awareness of possible problem areas. The counselor can then ask the primary question:

- With his family background or history of abuse of substances or relationships will the candidate be able to develop independently within a seminary setting, and later as a pastor?

Potential or actual addiction to any of the substances or relationships should be regarded as serious. Without intervention there is little doubt that such addictions will persist or worsen. In the case of some addictions, especially those to relationships, seminary life might in fact aggravate the stress on the addict.

For a clearer picture of the addiction and for adequate intervention an in-depth assessment must be done, in this case by a professional psychologist or psychiatrist. The clinician will evaluate the cognitive, emotional and behavioral processes of the candidate as each affects and is affected by his biological, psychological and social life.[33]

On the cognitive level the psychologist will assess the candidate's cognitive style, i.e., how he organizes the world around him, and how capable he is of cognitive social problem solving. Evidence of possible functional damage will be looked for since central nervous system deterioration can serve as a measure of the severity of substance addictions. The type of assessment instruments the clinician might use for this part of the testing and which he or she will mention in the report, could include the *Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, Revised*, the *Bender-Gestalt Visual Motor Test*, and the *Adult Neuropsychological Questionnaire*.

Emotionally, the candidate's level of stress and anxiety, and his ability to cope with these, and his ability to express emotions will be evaluated. In connection with this his self-image and self-esteem should be gauged. The clinician will need to assess the level of depression which, as mentioned earlier, is often an accompanying difficulty for the addict. Other forms of psychopathology at this level will also be assessed, e.g., paranoid and delusional thinking, obsessions, or psychosomatic symptoms. Here instruments like the well known *Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, Revised* and the *Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory*, and other personality tests might be used.

On the level of behavior, relationships and especially family relationships, an in-depth analysis of family dynamics will be helpful. The actual addictive behavior can be analyzed with the help of a variety of instruments specifically designed for this purpose. Here tests like the *Addiction Severity Index* or the *Chemical Dependency Assessment Survey* might be useful. On the social level the clinician may wish to look for evidence of aggressiveness, manipulation, impulsivity, or sex-role conflict in the candidate.

The result of such an assessment will be a psychological report which will help the vocation counselor to judge the suitability of the candidate or seminarian. If the person has been found to fit Zucker's first category of "antisocial alcoholism" or his fourth category of "negative affect alcoholism," there would be reason to suggest that he might not be a suitable candidate. This, of course, would also depend upon his openness to intervention which we have yet to discuss.

If the candidate was assessed as falling within Zucker's second and third category, the "developmental alcoholisms," which are related to specific stages of psychosocial development, there would be more reason to be hopeful about his success within the seminary setting, once again, dependent upon his attitude towards using the help of intervention. For all cases the assessment should be clear on the type of intervention recommended and its probable success.

WHAT TREATMENTS ARE AVAILABLE FOR ADDICTIONS?

Although the vocation counselor will not generally be involved in the intervention process, it may be helpful to know what type of treatment has taken place or needs to take place for the candidate. The professional's recommendation is of primary importance here, and it should be followed through.

For substance addiction a three-phase treatment process is in order: detoxification, rehabilitation and aftercare.[14] The first two phases may take place within a residential setting although this is not necessary. The process of detoxification involves "drying-out" the addict and restoring him to physical health. This may need the use of medication, diet, and exercise. It is essential before any other intervention can be effective. In the case of heroin addiction methadone may be used in the detoxification process.

Once the addict is detoxified the process of rehabilitation can begin—within the institution or on an out-patient basis. Following this period of intense intervention there should be scheduled check-ups either at the institution or within an out-patient setting. Since the vocational counselor will probably encounter the addict during or after rehabilitation, this last section of the chapter will look at these phases for substance and for non-substance addictions.

In the case of substance addiction—alcohol, drugs and food—medical treatment may accompany psychological intervention. During rehabilitation and especially during the first three to six months until he has acquired other strengths the alcoholic may need the assistance of antabuse, a drug which causes symptoms of serious physical distress when the alcoholic consumes any alcohol. If other treatments have failed, the cocaine or heroin addict may be on a maintenance dosage of methadone, which in this case serves as a less dangerous substitute for these drugs. Other medications may be used to help reduce the stress and anxiety of abstinence.

A variety of types of interventions exists for these addicts. Individual, one-to-one therapy has proved effective with alcoholics. It would be based upon the theoretical approach of the therapist. Individual intervention may be especially needed for those addicts who suffer from depression, anxiety, or other emotional problems which are often associated with these addictions. Group and family therapy may serve as adjuncts to individual therapy, with group therapy being especially effective with acting-out sociopaths. Generally alcoholism is the first focus for intervention, followed by treatment for other pathologies.

In the case of drug and eating addictions group therapy is effective. Again there are a variety of models for groups depending on the therapist's theoretical orientation.

For all of these addictions self-help groups on the model of Alcoholics Anonymous are very helpful.[15] The self-help group provides a readily accessible program in which the addict's denial is confronted and rehabilitation is supported by fellow addicts. In addition the group serves as a stimulus for changes in personal values and interpersonal behavior.

In the relational and behavioral addictions—dependent relationships, religious fanaticism, excessive spending, gambling and workaholism—the treatment phase of detoxification involves nonmedical procedures. A period of concerted freeing of the person, however, should be aimed at abstinence. These addicts also need strong support to achieve "sobriety." For these forms of addiction individual therapy may be most effective. For each, however, there are such self-help groups as Gamblers Anonymous and Shoppers Anonymous. These groups are modelled on the twelve step program of Alcoholics Anonymous. They offer both the support and confrontation that the addict may need.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Through this discussion it has been the intention of the author to give a brief summary of the possible addictions that might face a vocation counselor in his or her work with a seminary candidate or seminarian. Each of these addictions, even if some seem of lesser importance than for example alcoholism or drug addiction, should be evaluated in the context of its potential impact on the formation process, seminary life, and ultimately the life of the ministry.

In order to make such an evaluation it will be helpful to have an assessment of the candidate so that the development of the addiction is clear—especially as it involves his family life. The type of addiction, in Zucker's sense of type and the dynamics of its development should be known, so that a judgment can be made on the effectiveness of past or future intervention.

The counselor's recommendation should be a clear and detailed one. If an addicted candidate is accepted, it is only fair that he know the expectations of the seminary and diocese in respect to his addiction. If a candidate is rejected, again the limiting factors of his addiction should be made clear so that he has no doubt about the judgment and the process used to arrive at it. Church ministers who suffer from addictions can contribute a wealth of service to the Christian community. A healthy awareness and treatment of their addictions both enrich that service, and ultimately guarantee its continuance.

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NOTES

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3

Spiritual Direction or Psychotherapy: A Primer for the Perplexed

by Charles Shelton, SJ

Are spiritual direction and therapy mutually exclusive? Can they interrelate for the benefit of the client or directee? This chapter delineates the purposes of both and addresses the problems of indiscriminate mixing of these forms of helping. While addressed primarily to the spiritual director what is offered relates to all aspects of human and spiritual development.

Bob McCormick is a 28 year old seminarian in his second year of theological studies. For the past two years you have found working with Bob as his spiritual director to be a positive experience. In monthly conferences Bob speaks openly about his desires for priestly ministry and serving the people of God. This young adult has been forthcoming about his fears and concerns as he nears ordination. Though academic studies do not overly excite him, he does appear to find joy in applying the knowledge of the classroom to more pastorally oriented courses dealing with human problems and concerns. Bob is cognizant of cultural and political tensions that confront the church, such as social justice controversies and the role of women, but his main focus centers on his personal preparation for priesthood. The question "What does it mean to be a priest in today's world?" engages much of your time together.

Over your past few conferences together Bob has shared more about his family background as a way for you to understand more fully his personal desires and goals for priestly ministry. Though he has mentioned before his distant relationship with his alcoholic father, the hurt Bob experienced in his family has only surfaced of late. Bob wonders aloud if being a priest is a way for him to please or find acceptance from this significant male figure. You have recently read an evaluation of Bob's latest field experience and the male supervisor observed that Bob rarely gave input and appeared to acquiesce to every demand made upon him. Moreover, Bob appeared to lack boundaries, frequently acceding to every parishioner's request, and frequently becoming irritable as a result of the demands made upon his time. Further, you have a hunch that Bob's relationship with women is an ambivalent one. You know he has several women friends, yet you have observed him several times telling demeaning jokes and being controlling in their presence.

Your strongest impression of Bob, however, is the growing unhappiness you sense in him. His ready smile and enthusiasm seem at times to wane too easily. Overall, his manner strikes you more and more as critical and impatient. Bob has rarely shared his angry feelings with you; on the other hand, you wonder if Bob would know when he is angry. You judge something is just "not right" and begin to reflect seriously whether Bob might profit from professional counseling. Still, you are cautious, not wanting to reduce every human concern in a spiritual setting to psychology, as some are wont to do. What do you do?

The above example and numerous variations face spiritual directors everyday. In this chapter we explore the domains of spiritual direction and psychotherapy. We begin by delineating the purpose and scope of both these professional relationships. We then shift to a broader discussion of the appropriate content of each relationship as a way to expand our understanding of spiritual direction and psychotherapy. Given that a goal of seminary training is optimal spiritual and psychological functioning as a means for effective ministry, a discussion of some "healthy" characteristics for ministerial life is provided. Some indicators for dysfunction and focus questions are then offered in order to help the director ascertain the directee's need for psychotherapy. I conclude with a brief discussion of clinical issues related to spiritual direction and an appendix for healthy living that spiritual directors might utilize both personally and in their work with directees.

DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN SPIRITUAL DIRECTION AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

Spiritual direction has a rich heritage in the Christian tradition, yet there exists no all-encompassing definition on which everyone might agree. Essentially, spiritual direction enables one to comprehend more deeply the questions: "What is my experience of God?" and "Where is the Lord leading me now?" More broadly, spiritual direction is a relationship in which a director provides support, guidance and insight for the directee's God experience. As a consequence of this relationship, the directee discerns more clearly the Lord's working in his/her life. More specifically, spiritual direction enables the directee at this current life juncture to address the question: "What does the Lord ask of me now?" As such, spiritual direction nourishes one's spiritual life by fostering both increasing self-awareness and the opportunity for spiritual growth. Paralleling these reflections, Brendan Collins states:

> If spirituality is the religious experience at the heart of every religion, spiritual direction can be considered the art of guiding and supporting someone in that experience. More formally, spiritual direction can be determined as an interpersonal relationship that fosters the discovery and nourishment of the transcendent or spiritual aspects of our lives.[1]

Another way we might delineate these two relationships is by focusing on the domain or content of spiritual direction. When I "free associate" when thinking of spiritual direction I arrive at the following words or phrases:

- explicit dialogue of God experience
- flow
- spiritual
- What is God asking?

- reflective
- values
- Where am I being led?
- meaning/purpose
- wellness
- narrative
- stories of God.[2]

As the reader might surmise, we traverse a field not precisely mapped out, yet we know the field's location and are comfortable in it.

What about psychotherapy?[3] Like "spiritual direction," there exists no universally accepted definition. Psychiatrist Jerome Frank offers a definition of psychotherapy that has guided my own therapeutic work. Frank states "psychotherapy is a planned, emotionally charged, confiding interaction between a trained socially sanctioned healer and a sufferer."[4] Utilizing Frank's definition, we glean the essential elements of psychotherapy: the relationship of a professional with someone who is suffering and the disclosure of acutely-felt personal experience.

Crucial to Frank's definition is his advocacy of the "demoralization hypothesis" as a significant factor for the psychotherapeutic process.

Demoralization occurs when, because of lack of certain skills or confusion of goals, an individual becomes persistently unable to master situations which both the individual and others expect him or her to handle or when the individual experiences continued distress which he or she cannot adequately explain or alleviate. Demoralization may be summed up as a feeling of subjective incompetence, coupled with distress.[5]

As a clinical psychologist, my therapy experience with clients corresponds with Frank's observations. People who enter psychotherapy experience problems in living, are distressed, and are often at a loss as to what to do about their situations. In short, as Frank maintains, they are demoralized.

Let us again "free associate." What words or phrases come to mind when we say "psychotherapy?" The following is my list:

- problems in living
- dysfunction
- pathology

- illness
- hurting
- demoralized
- negative feelings
- emotional confusion or suffering.

Our "free association" yields some fruitful clarification. Whereas spiritual direction centers more on the *flow of life*, particularly in relation to God's call, psychotherapy focuses on *problems in life* and the personal distress that ensues.

The discerning reader at this point might inquire: "What about pastoral counseling?" Generally speaking, pastoral counseling neither focuses exclusively on one's God experience nor does it attempt to address serious emotional dysfunction. Pastoral counseling is best viewed as firmly ensconced between the transcendent focus of spiritual direction and the evaluation of human functioning that so preoccupies psychotherapy. In short, pastoral counseling does address everyday problems of living, but it does so from a distinctive value stance. That is, pastoral counselors aid individuals with addressing everyday problems and how these problems influence their living of the Christian life. For example, a woman might be under significant stress trying to juggle the demands of career and home. A pastoral counselor would help her cope with stress and realize the burdensome impact of numerous demands, but the pastoral counselor would also help her make value choices that reflect the Gospel and foster her awareness of her own deepest desires. Thus a counselor would address the woman's human functioning (e.g., responses to stress) but a *pastoral* counselor would not only focus on how her stress is influencing her decisions but inquire about her value choices and the relationship between the woman's stress response and her desires, values, and life goals.

This "value" focus is critical. An increasing tendency of pastoral counselors and spiritual directors is to "play" psychologist. In a provocative article entitled "Why Does Psychology Always Win?" spiritual writer Richard Rohr probes the dangers of accepting uncritically the ideology of psychology. In a psychological mindset the subjective self becomes the moral reference point and redemptive suffering is reduced to self-serving victimhood.[6] Spiritual directors and pastoral counselors must continuously challenge themselves so as not to dilute the Christian message to mere psychological platitudes.

Perhaps a more serious temptation is the tendency among many in ministry to reduce pastoral care to psychological understanding. Vital issues like "grace," "forgiveness," and "sin" fall victim to psychological jargon of "self-actualization," "reframing," and "self-esteem issues." Psychiatrist Robert Coles addresses this problem squarely:

> Especially sad and disedifying is the preoccupation of all too many clergy with the dubious blandishments of contemporary psychology and psychiatry. I do not mean to say there is no value in understanding what psychoanalytic studies, and others done in this century by medical and psychological investigators, have to offer any of us who spend time with our fellow human beings—in the home, in school, at work, and certainly, in the various places visited by ministers and priests. The issue is the further step not a few of today's clergy have taken—whereby "pastoral counseling," for instance, becomes their major ideological absorption and the use of the language of psychology their major source of self-satisfaction. Surely we are in danger losing our religious faith when the chief satisfaction of our lives consists of an endless attribution of psychological nomenclature to all who happen to come our way.[7]

On the other hand, realizing the dangers of over-psychologizing should not be used as a rationale for dismissing the positive influence of psychology on the ministry of spiritual direction. The insights of psychology have been increasingly applied to the practice of spiritual direction. Among these are: the use of the case study method and the exploration of clinical factors that influence the spiritual direction relationship (e.g., transference); the informed insights provided by developmental psychology studies; and newer formulations of women's experience offered by feminist psychologists.[8]

RELIGIOUS OR PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCE?

Having offered some definitions of these two relationships, let us proceed to explore more closely the content domain of each. What is the experience of spiritual direction as opposed to the experience of psychotherapy? First, we must define "experience." For our purposes, experience means essentially an occurrence of self-awareness that includes some emotive quality. In other words, experience interweaves both cognitive and emotional features. The former is understood through self-awareness or self-understanding whereas the latter is defined as some degree of intensity or excitation whose focus is an object, situation or person. For example, after visiting my best friend and his wife, a brother Jesuit inquires as to how I enjoyed my trip. I respond enthusiastically, "It was great!" What do I mean? Obviously I am referring to the *experience* of the visit, that is, my awareness of the trip and the positive feeling it elicited. In essence, what we are describing is psychological or human experience. Again, such experience is threaded with cognition and affect. When such human experience impairs or precludes normal human functioning, then the task of psychotherapy is to help the person sort out such experience by challenging the client's distorted thinking patterns and aiding the client in understanding his/her emotional state and reactions.

A distinctive type of human experience is an aesthetic experience. What defines such experience is its other-focus. In other words, one is led beyond the self by the tangible reality one perceives. Hearing a Brahms symphony or viewing a painting by Monet might invite such a loosening of self-consciousness wherein the focus shifts from the self to a felt-absorption or altered consciousness that embraces or transfixes onto the perceived work of art.

Religious experience is very much human experience, but that experience raised to a qualitatively new level. In religious experience one confronts Mystery—the radical otherness that invites one to surrender or let go. Religious experience involves the presence of Transcendence (however it might be experienced) that invites, in its Christian understanding, the Lord's beckoning "Come follow me" (Mk. 10:21). The fruits of such experience are often new layers of meaning and purpose, greater degrees of connectedness and wholeness, and increased willingness to respond unstintingly in service to other men and women. In essence, religious experience enhances one's capacity for selfless love which, in the Christian tradition, is modeled on the life and death of Jesus Christ. "The given factor is, after all: definitive salvation-coming-from-God in

Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified-and-risen One. 'It is God who delivers us in Jesus Christ' (see 2 Cor. 5:19). God saved, but in and through the man Jesus, his message, life and death."[9]

In sum, religious experience is an invitation that invites on our part a willing receptivity. Religious experience encourages a tranquil spirit that refrains from the willful "I" and "me" and embraces the connecting and intertwining of self with other meanings. On a personal level, religious experience diminishes the autonomous self and enhances the communal self. Religious experience beckons wholeness and purpose and links one's experience, if even at first only at an inchoative or tacit level, with the message and life of Jesus.

Yet religious experience is also *human*. The mystery of being human is that it is through our human senses that we are beckoned forth and invited to experience our capacity for transcendence. Let us now briefly examine various human experiences that allow for and encourage religious experience or the encounter with Mystery.[10] These are the experiences that form the content dimension for spiritual direction.

1) *A work of beauty*. All of us have experienced the "awe" that arises from aesthetic beauty. When I listen to the haunting melodies of Mozart's great D minor piano concerto I am often filled with awe. Painting, music, poetry, various dance forms all have the power to lead us beyond ourselves to new levels of meaning and integration.

2) *Encountering nature*. The majesty of the Rockies and the soothing gurgle of a flowing stream are just two of nature's wonders that might stimulate the core experience we term "religious."

3) *Realizing complexity*. Wrestling in one's mind with the workings of quantum mechanics or watching intently the spinning of the spider as its weaves its web or contemplating the stars invite us to consider God's intricate handiwork. We marvel at the interrelationships of nature whether they be sub-atomic particles such as quarks or the convoluted if puzzling branchings of ecosystems and galaxies.

4) *Acknowledging evil*. Some events simply jolt us; we have no response but unease if not horror. Reading in the paper about four guards shot in cold blood in a bank robbery assaults our moral senses. We grow numb after viewing television pictures depicting

the weekly starving of thousands of African children. At such moments we grope for coherence and purpose.

5) *Experiencing love.* The wonder of intimacy—of giving oneself totally to another, of sharing confidences, or of risking trust—allows for deepening levels of acceptance. Every human being desires acceptance and we each search for those people who allow us to be, simply, ourselves. No price can be placed on the friend who knows us so well he/she anticipates our needs and acts accordingly. Partaking in such relationships, our defenses are lowered and our hearts radiate the peacefulness and tranquility that comes with unconditional love.

6) *Moments of gratitude.* Realizing the Lord's acceptance of us, even in our sinfulness, or experiencing the forgiveness or challenge of a friend fosters gratitude. When we possess a "grateful heart" we are apt to view our lives as gifts as we recall how the Lord has showered us with his grace and love. When we experience our lives as gifts we find ourselves wanting to respond back in service—we desire to return the love the Lord has shown us.

7) *The need for integrity.* For everyone there are some life experiences that challenge our most core values. A significant life decision, the need to take a position or act a certain way regardless of the consequences, engender a consciousness of who we really are at the most core level. At such moments we probe our deepest desires and those values that most authenticate our self-definitions.

8) *Experiencing oneself as powerless.* At times we might reach a point where in our hearts we know we have done all that we can. We are powerless to effect change or do more. At such moments we turn to the Lord with the stark realization of our poverty, and come to realize that it is in this very weakness that we find strength (2 Cor 12:10).

9) *Moments of wonder.* Parents never cease to marvel at watching their child's growing self-discovery or take delight observing their child's learning something for the first time, or viewing the child's fascination with the most simple object. Likewise, in ministry we never cease to be amazed by the complexities of situations, the vagaries of circumstances as they unfold and the unexpected results that arise.

10) *Consolation.* At some precious moments we are filled with the deepest serenity and peace. We are overcome with a calm-

ness whose origin escapes us. At such moments we turn to the Lord whose tender beckoning touches us.

11) *Self-discovery*. As we reflect our life histories each of us has moments where we make a connection or arrive at insight. Perhaps it is realizing the cause or meaning for a parent's behavior and its impact (whether positive or negative) upon us. Maybe our relationship with a trusted friend or spouse now makes more sense or perhaps one simply has greater understanding of one's own life history. In such instances our narration (inner dialogue) achieves greater clarity. From such realizations are derived coherence and wholeness, bringing new meaning to one's on-going self-definition and renewed purpose for one's life project.

12) *Solitude*. In moments of aloneness we are at times offered opportunity to be more attentive to the Lord's call or understand more completely who we are and act accordingly. In solitude layers of self are often glimpsed more perceptively, offering the possibility for wholeness and refashioning of or recommitment to one's life goals.

HEALTHY LIVING AND THE MINISTERIAL LIFE

Though we made efforts to point out the distinctive qualities of religious experience as the content area of spiritual direction, we must not ignore the everyday role of human experience; specifically, that aspect of experience that pertains to healthy living. It bears pointing out that the goal of ministry is not "health" per se. Ministers of the Gospel do not come together and labor because of health. Indeed, the Gospel challenge oftentimes leads ministers to heroic personal sacrifice that embraces suffering. Yet healthy living is necessary for flexibility and effective ministerial commitment. When living in a healthy manner, the minister best insures his or her openness to hear the Lord's self-communicating presence and the ability to respond accordingly. In sum, health becomes a most effective means for a free response to the Lord's call.

While different definitions of healthy emotional functioning exist, they all have common features. Examples of these attributes include self-competence, adequate coping skills, autonomy/responsibility, self-awareness, adequate interpersonal functioning, capacity for commitment, and a developed philosophy of life.[11]

From the standpoint of mental health, we might ask what characterizes the well-functioning minister. When asked what was the essence of emotionally healthy functioning, Freud responded simply, "Lieben und arbeiten" (to love and to work). Freud's response is instructive because it points to fundamental requirements for mature living: bonded attachment and meaningful commitment. What would this look like in a healthy minister? Below are ten characteristics I would suggest as a way of fleshing out the notion of healthy ministerial living. [An Appendix is added that lists some focus questions offering reflection on each characteristic.]

1) *Prayer.* Prayer provides spiritual benefits; it also plays a vital role in the minister's psychological health. Prayer is the gateway to the minister's commitment to the ideals of priestly ministry and the apostolic work of the diocese or religious congregation; this commitment has psychological overtones. Ministers who neither desire a prayer life nor make reasonable efforts to pray divorce themselves from their very *self-identity* as persons called to be available for apostolic service, the root of the ministerial life. A prayerless life saps commitment, because it directs ministers away from their apostolic centeredness, from the ability to find God in their labors and to direct their work according to God's will rather than their own. In short, ministers who do not even desire to pray flirt with losing touch with their basic identity, because they lack a vital means for understanding their own selves as apostolic laborers.

2) *Friends within the priesthood or religious congregation.* "Friends" minimally means that the minister has at least a few people with whom he/she can share the spiritual hungers, apostolic desires, and the emotional joys and hurts of his/her life. When I spend time with a close Jesuit friend, I find myself sustained and nourished. When I reflect upon our time together, my experience with him seldom fails to leave me inspired. No matter what I might be going through or what situation I might be encountering, the felt experience of this friendship leads me to conclude that the ideals of the Society of Jesus do exist, because I have experienced them with this brother. In sum, friends provide a grounding, an anchor, for one's vocation.

3) *Relationships with lay colleagues.* Healthy emotional living is also sustained by bonds outside the priestly ministry or religious congregation. Friendships with lay colleagues serve to foster maturity and insight. By its very nature friendship is non-possessive, because it wills the genuine good of the other. In this respect, healthy friendships with lay men and women inevitably enrich one's friendships within the priestly ministry or religious congregation and vice versa. From another perspective, friendships with lay colleagues provide a needed counterweight to misperceptions some in priestly ministry and particularly those in religious congregations are apt to have. Religious life is challenging, yet in many ways secure. Unencumbered by the routine daily tasks with which many lay people struggle (meeting bills, paying taxes, finding a job, sacrificing in a marriage, lacking privacy, feeding a baby), those in religious life can be tremendously isolated and succumb to a distorted idealization of life outside the community. (Religious and to a lesser degree diocesan priests may not believe that these idealizations of married life adequately reflect reality, but subconsciously they are influenced by these perceptions.) Any close relationship a religious or priest has with a married couple will serve as a healthy corrective to this limited perspective.

4) *A sense of humor.* Humor reflects a style that is affectionate and playful. Humor serves not only as a source of affection (we like people we can laugh with), but also as an invaluable aid in defusing naturally occurring sexual and aggressive impulses; it is a very valuable defense mechanism. Of course, humor is a double-edged sword and can be a sign of lack of charity as well as a loving response. Examples of the former include biting sarcasm, passive-aggressive responses, and sexual innuendos.

5) *Meaningful work.* In *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud remarked that work is our strongest link to reality. Service to God's people has a special place in the minister's heart. At the same time, work can easily become a distorted good if it fosters workaholic tendencies or prevents one from attending to other areas of his/her life. A subtle but destructive tendency for many well-intentioned ministers is, simply, "to do more." This is especially tempting as the needs of the church become more pressing and personnel shortages more critical. At some point, every minister must examine his/

her ministerial efforts in order to establish healthy boundaries. A minister's apostolic life must balance play, rest, work, and prayer.

6) *Apostolic flexibility*. Since the completion of Vatican II we have witnessed an explosion of questions regarding the nature of church, its role in the modern world, and the very meaning of ministry. Given the need for modern day ministers of the church to be adaptive and flexible, capable of dealing with ambiguity not only in their own lives but in the very context of ministry, it is reasonable that ministers monitor their own openness and availability for missioning. Ministers should reflect on their continuing response to their own growth and to the needs of the church by considering talents, interests, and personal goals in light of those needs.

7) *Presence to one's ideals*. By ideals I mean the presence of a life project or theme that guides one's conduct. Such themes and projects become moral reference points for the authentic living of core values. As ministers we need continually to be challenged to be in touch with our "deepest desires." In other words, what are the deepest desires that guide one's life? Careful attention to these deeply felt interior movements provides, psychologically, a coherent and particularly useful purpose in moments of crisis or stress. Reflecting on one's ideals engenders self-awareness as to "who one is" at this most fundamental level. Such awareness forges one's integrity and links that integrity to one's everyday attitudes and behavior.

8) *Increasing self-knowledge*. Adequate self-knowledge provides the psychological foundation for freely responding to the Lord's invitation. Through self-knowledge one plunges more deeply into personal darkness and psychological vulnerabilities; when one confronts these vulnerabilities, they can lead to greater interior freedom. At the same time, mature friendships, openness with superiors, supportive community environments (for example, faith sharing groups), healthy investment in apostolic work, experiments with possible new ministries, and if needed or desired, psychotherapy can also help to increase self-knowledge.

9) *A humble stance*. Probably no attitudes are more vital to the healthy living of ministerial life in this last decade of the 20th century than humility, understanding, forgiveness, and patience. From a historical perspective the changes initiated by Vatican II have yet to reach final form. No one can clearly predict how ministries will evolve or how community structures are going to be defined.

Given this reality, some ministers experience fundamental uncertainty and ambiguity about their ministerial lives, as well as about basic theological issues which need on-going discussion, such as the nature of priesthood or ministry. In such ambiguous times, a humble stance is essential for dialogue and mature communal functioning. On an interpersonal level, a psychological correlate to this humble stance is the recognition of another's complexity. Every human being is infinitely more complex than we might imagine. In our dealings within the community, we need to take this simple truth more to heart. Personally, I have found that the more I am cognizant of another's life history, the less judgmental I am; in sum, "to know all is to forgive all." At the same time, showing loving care towards others because of a troubled life history does not mean that they cannot be compassionately challenged regarding their maladaptive behavior patterns.

10) *Solitude*. My own impression is that individuals who find moments of solitude difficult also experience relationships as problematic. In order to engage others in meaningful ways, we require time alone with ourselves. In a culture that overvalues relationships, solitude is undervalued. Yet solitude performs a critical role in healthy functioning. In times of stress, solitude can be a welcome respite. It also serves a healing function when one is confronting loss. Moreover, solitude is vital for the nourishment of our imaginative and creative endeavors.[12]

Solitude requires effort and the development of healthy boundaries between us, our work, and our social intercourse. I suspect that solitude is subject to a developmental process; it takes on greater meaning with age. As a 22 year old novice, I at times found solitude difficult. However, typing this paper in my early 40s, I find I have come to relish more and more the solitary time so necessary for personal reflection and creation.

DYSFUNCTION IN MINISTRY AND THE NEED FOR REFERRAL

One of the most popular words in psychological circles today is "dysfunctional." I do believe that the focus on dysfunctional behavior, particularly as applied to substance abuse and chemical addictions in families, is a valid insight. Nonetheless, caution is warranted. Such terms are increasingly thrown around with no common agreement as to their meaning. In addition, the facile use of this term to label others can lead to deep hurt. We must be aware that to some degree "dysfunctional" is a faddish term and that a great industry has grown up in the past few years; some have great self-interest in keeping such jargon in the public mind. (Witness the wide variety of books on dysfunctional behavior available in bookstores.) Finally, we must avoid using dysfunctional as a way to deny the "human condition." To some degree we are all dysfunctional. For some, I suspect the facile use of their labeling others as "dysfunctional" masks their own inability to acknowledge their unmet needs and unresolved emotional conflicts. The key issue, of course, is to focus on those aspects of our lives that are emotionally problematic and that cripple to a significant degree our personal growth and sound apostolic endeavors. We should be realistic about what we can change and use such realism to alter those self-understandings, feelings or behaviors that unduly compromise our capacity for effective ministry. As one might expect, use of the term "dysfunctional" has far outstripped the scientific evidence.

What exactly does it mean for a seminarian or minister of the Gospel to be "dysfunctional?" Though by no means exhaustive I would like to offer the following check-list for the spiritual director or seminary head to consider when attempting to determine whether someone is in need of psychotherapy.

1) Displaying behaviors (e.g., over-controlling, overly dependent) that disrupt the sustaining of and growth in interpersonal relationships.

2) Deficiencies in interpersonal relationship skills that frustrate personal friendships and team ministerial endeavors.

3) Serious self-esteem issues that influence adversely one's apostolic work or sense of self-competence. Examples here would include compensatory behaviors whose purpose is to assuage crippling guilt or felt-personal inadequacies.

4) Mood disturbances (e.g., depression, anger, anxiety) that impede everyday functioning.

5) Distorted sense of self-evaluation as evidenced by unrealistic aspirations, self-aggrandizement (narcissism), or overly critical interpretation of self or others.

6) On-going display of impulsive behaviors (e.g., substance abuse, emotional outbursts).

7) Lingering inability to resolve developmental issues as evidenced by problems in developing an adequate sense of one's self-definition (identity) or sustaining healthy relationships (intimacy).

8) Inability to distance oneself adequately from painful family history issues or resolve, where appropriate, lingering unnegotiated conflicts with parents.

9) Decision-making problems evidenced by a drifting, confused state, lack of life goals or direction, or inability to make significant life decisions.

Given the above behaviors, it is helpful to offer some "focus questions" as a means to clarify both for the director and the directee whether psychotherapy is indicated.

As a preliminary consideration, however, the *first* point needing mention is the need to identify concretely the behaviors that are a cause of concern. For example, if a director is concerned about the directee's self-esteem and negative self-image, he/she should identify specific feelings, statements and behaviors that manifest or result from such negative images of self. To simply say there are "self-esteem issues" is counter-productive. The term is nebulous and the director and directee might well have different meanings for the terms as well as different examples of its manifestations! Again, be as concrete and specific as possible about the exact behaviors that cause you concern and why such behaviors give you reason to believe that professional consultation is warranted.

The director should share these concerns openly with the directee and invite comments or observations. Ideally, such discussion will shed further light on the directee's psychological state and provide further clarification.

The following "focus questions" will prove helpful for the director to consider when wondering about the need for psychotherapy.

1) How long has the problem been going on? Identify as concretely as possible the problem(s).

2) In what specific ways has this problem adversely influenced this person's capacity for living an emotionally and spiritually rewarding life in ministry? Be willing to share with the directee your reasons for making this judgment.

3) Is this problem getting worse? What evidence do you have for making this statement?

4) What resources, e.g., healthy friendships, good self-image, can this directee draw upon for support? A rule of thumb here is that the fewer resources the individual has, the more likely problems will surface and prove problematic.

5) How much psychological discomfort is this person in?

6) If available, do comments and observations of others confirm your own concerns?

7) If nothing is done, if no professional consultation is sought, what will happen a year from now to this directee? Or: How will this directee be functioning a year from now if no outside consultation is sought? It is helpful to pose this question with the directee and elicit his/her response.

8) How is this directee the "same" and "different" from other directees you have worked with?

9) Has this directee experienced the normal developmental tasks that are age-appropriate, e.g., identity consolidation, healthy sense of intimacy, generativity, or do unresolved issues linger or exist?

10) Are there issues in this person's family background that remain unresolved or unduly burden current functioning?

Usually no one question answers conclusively the need for psychotherapy. Given any directee, a select group of the above questions will often aid the director in attempting to discern the need for psychotherapy. Oftentimes it is helpful to reflect on several of these questions over a designated period. With time, an appropriate answer is usually forthcoming as to the need for outside consultation.

SOME RELATED ISSUES

Though we have made clear the differences between spiritual direction and psychotherapy, it is also true that both are encounters where intimacies are shared within the context of an interpersonal relationship. As such, it is helpful to reflect briefly on three issues that might arise in the context of the spiritual director-directee relationship.

First, given the nature of the spiritual direction relationship, there might well develop transference issues. Transference might loosely be defined as placing onto another person in an interpersonal relationship feelings or unresolved conflicts that had originally been experienced in one's own earlier life experiences, usually childhood. These feelings are unconsciously experienced, e.g., love, idealization, fear, anger, and they potentially exist as a complicating factor in the development of a discerning relationship in spiritual direction. For example, the directee might unconsciously view the director as a father or mother figure and attempt to relate to the director the way he/she related as a child (e.g., acquiescing to the director's every statement or being overly dependent on the director). At the same time, the director must be open to considering that he/she has developed transference issues towards the directee. The director, for example, might unconsciously feel the need to please or to be a paternal or maternal influence in the directee's life. Transference issues exist as part of most significant relationships. It is difficult to avoid them; nonetheless, they can usually be dealt with adequately.

First, reflect on how often you think about or fantasize the directee. If you are thinking too much about the person, then you might need to pause and critically reflect on the relationship.

Second, image in your mind the person you are directing. What feelings come to mind? Name them. Are they appropriate? stronger or more intense than what might be expected? If so, transference issues might be present.

Third, ask yourself: Does this directee remind me of anyone else in my life? Make sure and consider not only physical features but also the directee's mannerisms, attitudes, affections, and any idiosyncratic behaviors.

Finally, you might consider discussing with your own spiritual director or a psychotherapist your reactions towards the directee if there is reason for concern.

A second issue concerns confidentiality. The information one obtains in the spiritual direction setting is confidential. However, if a directee is in psychotherapy it might in some cases be helpful for the director to have a session with the therapist. If the director and directee believe that this is appropriate then of course the directee's agreement to divulge information must be obtained. The director and directee should agree on what information will be shared and the limits of such discussion. After the session with the therapist, the director should share with the directee at the next conference exactly what transpired.

On a related issue, the director should be circumspect regarding prying into the directee's psychotherapy sessions unless the directee brings up such matters and wishes to discuss them. Undue interest in such matters might indicate control issues and conflicts that the director has yet to resolve.

A final issue concerns the referral process. Having referred a directee to psychotherapy, the director might have lingering feelings of inadequacy. That is, at some level the director feels he or she "should have" been able to help the directee sort out whatever life problems exist without the need for outside intervention. From a psychoanalytic perspective, this might be viewed as a case of wounded narcissism or, more colloquially stated, a "blow to one's ego." In such cases, the director should remember the following. One sign of professionalism is knowing one's limits. All professionals carry out their mission within the confines of their expertise and the acceptable boundaries of their practice. Rather than a feeling of failure, a referral to another professional should be viewed as a sign of one's professionalism and the desire to do, in the long run, what is best for the directee's emotional and spiritual functioning.

Ultimately, the purpose of spiritual direction and psychotherapy are highly similar. Both attempt through dialogue in the context of a relationship to foster insight and self-knowledge—the former through examining the narrative flow of one's God experience, the latter through careful probing of and attention to human functioning and life problems. The directee is best served when the spiritual director can view psychotherapy as a reliable ally in supporting and sustaining the directee's spiritual journey.

APPENDIX

Below are some focus questions that a director or directee might utilize in assessing the quality of his/her mental health in the context of ministry. Each set of questions reflects on one of the characteristics noted above as essential for healthy living in the context of ministry. The director might draw upon some of these questions for his or her own life as well as offer them to a directee for his/her reflection. Just as we make an annual retreat for our "spiritual health" we need to assess on an annual basis our "emotional health." The following questions are provided to foster critical reflection and insight with an eye towards obtaining more healthy human functioning.

Prayer

- How would I describe the quality of my prayer?
- How has my prayer spoken to me about my relationship with the Lord?
- In what ways has my prayer fostered for me self-understanding regarding my apostolic work and life?

Priest and religious friends

- Who are my closest priest friends? (or seminarian or religious friends)?
- What is it about each of these friendships that I find significant for my vocation?
- How "healthy" is each of these friendships?
- What criteria do I use to assess the health of this friendship?
- What does this friendship tell me about the Lord's love for me?
- Am I possessive of this friend?
- Do I collude with this friend in some unhealthy behaviors, e.g., excessive gossiping, cynicism, blaming others, etc.?
- What aspects about this friendship are non-growthful?
- What do I need in this friendship? Are we both aware of our own and the other's needs? Are these needs healthy?

Relationships with lay men and women

- Who are my friends outside the priesthood, seminary, religious congregation?
- What function does each of these friendships serve in my life?
- How "healthy" are each of these relationships?

Sense of humor

- How do I use humor in my life?
- Does my humor make me a more loving person?
- Does my humor build others up?
- Are there unhealthy aspects to my humor? For example, do I use humor to be passive-aggressive, cynical, hurtful of others, etc.

Meaningful work

- What for me are the most meaningful aspects of my apostolic work?
- Do I have a hobby?
- Do I play? Is my type of play healthy?
- Do I have boundaries from my work?
- Is there a creative aspect to my work? How does my work nurture my creative side? If not, what concrete steps can I take to nourish my creativity?

Apostolic flexibility

- Who do I hope to be in five/ten years? What am I doing even now to insure that I might be who I desire to be in five/ten years?
- What important issues/concerns stimulate me and engage my interests? How are or might these issues/concerns be incorporated into my apostolic work?
- What training will allow me to become more who I desire to be and address more the issues/concerns I perceive as vital? Can I identify such training? Can I talk to superiors about the possibility of pursuing such training?

Presence to one's ideals

- What are the ideals and deepest desires that guide my life? How have these ideals/desires changed over the history of my vocation?
- How do my actual behaviors live out the ideals/desires I cherish? In what areas is there need for improvement?

- How realistic are my ideals/desires? Might some unrealism at times lead me to be frustrated? cynical? depressed? unfulfilled?
- How would I describe my "integrity"? To what degree is my integrity present in my everyday actions and behaviors? Are there behaviors I engage in that lack the integrity I desire to live out?

Increasing self-knowledge

- During this past year what insights have I gained about myself?
- In what areas of my life do I still need to grow?
- To what degree do I use friendships, dialogue with superiors, my community, faith-sharing groups, apostolic work, experiments with new ministries to gain self-knowledge?

A humble stance

- When conflict occurs am I able to look at myself and examine to what degree I am at fault?
- Am I overly critical?
- Am I able to challenge others in a compassionate manner?
- Am I overly defensive?
- Do I invite challenge from others?
- What is my experience of interpersonal conflict? Do I avoid it? run from it? become self-righteous? become a victim? a blamer? try and work it out?

Solitude

- What role does solitude play in my life?
- How comfortable am I with solitude? Is it an area in which I need to grow?
- How do I deal with loneliness? Where do I go when I am lonely? What do I do when I am lonely?
- Does my solitude enhance my creative side? my growth? How?

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NOTES

1. Brendan Collins, "The Changing Relationship Between Psychology and Contemporary Spiritual Direction," *Pastoral Psychology*, Vol. 40, No. 5, 1992, p. 286.
2. The reader is encouraged to "free associate" to this term and create a list of his/her own.
3. The reader might wonder about the difference between "counseling" and "psychotherapy." These terms are often used interchangeably. In general, "counseling" is a professional relationship wherein the problems being addressed are less serious or the self-knowledge acquired is more limited. Most of what is said in these pages applies to either term. I prefer the term "psychotherapy" simply because of its linkage with the word "psychological."
4. Jerome D. Frank, "Therapeutic Components Shared by All Psychotherapies," *The Master Lecture Series: Psychotherapy Research and Behavior Change*, American Psychological Association, Vol. 1, 1981, p. 10.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
6. Richard Rohr, "Why Does Psychology Always Win?" *Sojourners*, Vol. 10, November, 1991, pp. 10–15.
7. Robert Coles, *Harvard Diary: Reflections on the Sacred and the Secular*, Crossroad, New York, 1989, p. 93.
8. Brendan Collins, op. cit., pp. 286–290.
9. Edward Schillebeeckx, *Jesus: An Experiment in Christology*, Vintage Books, New York, 1981, p. 665.
10. I do not mean for this list to be exhaustive. I only mean to offer some examples of religious experience that we might typically encounter. The reader might well have others. I base these examples on personal experience and my own clinical and pastoral work as well as two articles: John H. Wright, "The Distinctive Quality of Religious Experience," *Logos*, Vol. 2, 1981, pp. 85–97; Frank

J. Houdek, "Jesuit Prayer and Jesuit Ministry," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits*, Vol 24, January 1992, pp. 22–31.

11. Jay P. Jensen and Allen E. Bergin, "Mental Health Values of Professional Therapists: A Nationwide Interdisciplinary Survey," *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, Vol. 19, June 1988, pp. 290–297.
12. These points are eloquently made by the psychiatrist Anthony Storr in his fascinating work *Solitude: A Return to the Self*, Ballatine Books, New York, 1988.

4

Counseling While in the Seminary

by Joyce Ridick, SSC

Clarification of terms is essential to any discussion of psychological help. After explaining the most common types of psychological help available in seminaries, this chapter discusses the factors which indicate whether such help should take place before entry into the seminary or during seminary formation. Further questions such as the choice of appropriate professional therapists and financial considerations are then addressed.

TYPES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL HELP AVAILABLE

Individual Counseling

The term "counseling" over the years has taken on many different meanings and interpretations. A counselor, in general, is one who gives advice. Webster describes counseling as "professional guidance of the individual by utilizing psychological methods especially in collecting case history data, using various techniques of the personal interview, and testing interests and aptitudes." The "psychological methods" are used not merely in the "collection of data" phase, but also in the follow up. These follow up methods may be many and varied in intensity and scope.

Perhaps the best-known and acknowledged understanding of counseling is a professional one-to-one encounter technique for growth known as "client-centered counseling." Arising from the humanistic-existential movement, this counseling is represented by the ideas of Carl Rogers, Rollo May, Ludwig Binswanger, Frederick Perls, Abraham Maslow, Erich Fromm and Irwin Yalom. The concept of personality here is built on the belief that people have inherent capacities to become healthy, fully-functioning individuals. Interruption in this natural, maturational growth process would require efforts to free the individual through such techniques as revival of past memories, independence training, paradoxical intention, and making full use of the cognitive-affective capacities of the individual.[1] The distinctive characteristics of this form of therapy are:

1) the hypothesis that certain attitudes in therapists constitute the necessary and sufficient conditions for therapeutic effectiveness;

2) a reliance on a growth model of psychotherapy and a rejection of the medical model in dealing with most psychological disturbances;

3) the concept of the therapists' function as being immediately present and accessible to clients, and relying on the therapists' moment-to-moment experiencing in their relationships with clients;

4) the intensive and continual focus on the phenomenological world of the client;

5) a developing theory that therapeutic process is marked by a change in the client's manner and immediacy of experiencing, with increasing ability to live more fully in the moment;

6) continued stress on the self-actualizing quality of the human organism as the motivational force in therapy;

7) a concern with the *process* of personality change, rather than with the structure of the personality;

8) emphasis on the need for continuing research to gain essential learning regarding psychotherapy;

9) the hypothesis that the same principles of therapy apply to all persons, whether they are categorized as "psychotic," "neurotic" or "normal;"

10) a view of psychotherapy as one specialized example of all constructive interpersonal relationships, which can be generalized to all relationships;

11) a determination to build all theoretical formulations out of the soil of experience, rather than twisting experience to fit a preformed theory;

12) a concern with the philosophical issues that derive from the practice of psychotherapy;

13) an exploration of wider parameters within which effective therapy can take place, including large groups and persons having low income.

The single element that most sets apart client-centered psychotherapy (counseling) from the other therapies is its insistence that the medical model—involving diagnosis of pathology, specificity of treatment, and desirability of cure—is a totally inadequate model for dealing with psychologically distressed or deviant persons.[2]

As can be seen from these concepts and methodological premises, counseling, or "client-centered psychotherapy" as it is more recently called, is seriously lacking in a number of ways.

In the event of "crisis intervention" of a serious nature, directive advice offered to a client may be necessary as an immediate precaution from a more serious regression. In such a situation counseling may be helpful and indicated.

In pastoral situations, or occasionally in the seminary where short-term advice is directly sought for an encapsulated situation which is time-limited, such methodology may be used, always with the realization of a serious limitation. The Christian's goal is NOT self-actualization as a primary one; self-transcendence is the call of the Christian, and this should be incorporated into any intervention.

This method is also limited in that it overlooks the very significant contribution of the subconscious to personality dynamics, and also overlooks religious values as objective norms in the ideals of the person. Furthermore, underlying structures are not considered important in change. The question remains: How much long-term change will occur with this directive form of intervention, handicapped as it is by factors which do not coincide with a comprehensive Christian anthropology of the person?

Supportive Psychotherapy

Supportive psychotherapy is often characterized or placed under "counseling." It is defined as "the creation of a therapeutic relationship as a temporary buttress or bridge for the deficient patient."[3] This relationship attempts to achieve ameliorative effects from a trauma or from excessive stress which has temporarily blocked the effective functioning of the person. Emotional support, a stable, caring atmosphere, understanding and a humane interpersonal environment are essential in these times, when exterior structures or environment are excessively threatening or debilitating. Crisis intervention is used for suicide threats and/or attempts, traumatic losses, or for a combination of stress-inducing occurrences which may make an already weak person unable to cope effectively with life. Excessive use of alcohol, sex, or sleep may be ways out of reality. Counseling, and more active intervention of the therapist by way of advice, suggestion and time for listening may be warranted here when underlying structures would not sustain more in depth intervention.

Supportive psychotherapy may be necessary not only for candidates with weaker or more sensitive structures within, but also for those who may simply need interim help in adjustment. Other social, academic or vocational areas which do not warrant long-term and in-depth exploration would best be handled by supportive counseling techniques.

Psychoanalysis and Psychoanalytic Therapy

Psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic therapy are based on five metapsychological concepts, some of which have not been proven by research. The constructs of psychoanalysis are:

1) The **dynamic** construct: all mental phenomena are the result of a continual interaction of forces that oppose one another such as turbulent intrapsychic impulses vs. society. This construct implies that human behavior and motivation are active, energy laden and changing at all times. As the balance of mental forces shifts, pathology may be overcome;

2) The **topographical** construct: mental phenomena reveal themselves at three different levels: the unconscious, preconscious

and the conscious. This acknowledges the persistence, resilience and inaccessibility of many conflicts which may appear in disguised forms;

3) The **structural** construct: the mental apparatus is divided into id, ego, superego; the id being instincts, the ego external reality demands and the superego one's moral precepts. These are "three harsh masters," with the ego serving the pivotal adaptive, executive function of mediation;

4) The **economic** construct: psychic energy is distributed, discharged, transformed in various ways. Ideas and affect are expressed or may be defended against in multifarious manners;

5) The **genetic** construct: the intrinsic core of illness resides in infancy or one's past, and early experiences are repeated until they become neutralized through consciousness. Present behavior is meaningfully related to one's past.

While aspects of Christian anthropology can find some true and useful elements in a few of these constructs, psychoanalysis as such is more oriented toward a human identity, and does not deal with spiritual identity or ministerial identity. Its structures of id, ego, superego do not allow for objective conscience and Gospel norms, and tend to be deterministic. Psychoanalysis deals more with psychopathology, rather than being a "pedagogical," preventive method of growth and integration.

Counterindications for psychoanalysis would be narcissistic character disorders alone, sexual disorders without neurotic traits, some deviant behaviors, some psychosomatic illnesses, schizoid or paranoid characters, psychosocial disorders, narcotic addictions, alcoholism, psychopathic personalities, antisocial characters.

In summary, psychoanalysis may not be the most helpful method of personal professional assistance in most, or even all cases, which would lead toward the maturity required for priesthood.

Psychodynamic-Insight Psychotherapy

Psychodynamic-insight therapy has three major premises in its dynamic personality theory as a basis for psychotherapy: 1) the notion of the unconscious; 2) the notion of conflict and defense; 3) the notion of an experiencing self and an observing self.[5] Sometimes called "expressive therapy," this therapy is suited to a wide range of psychopathology with mild to moderate structural weaknesses. The persons best suited for this type are persons with fairly well integrated egos who have the capacity to sustain as well as detach from a bond of dependency and trust. "They are to some degree psychologically minded, self-motivated, have the capacity for tolerance of frustration, capacity for introspection and impulse control, and are able to keep the distinction between fantasy and reality."[6]

This therapeutic technique and theory is acceptable in its essential core. However, it does not go far enough. Here again one may be dealing with psychopathology. Presuming that most psychopathology has been screened prior to entrance into the seminary (which is not always the case!), the pedagogical function of therapy may use some of these techniques in its process. However, objective theocentric values and norms are never mentioned or discussed as part of the integrating experience.

If there is a deficit in human identity serious enough to warrant therapy before entrance, and only a secular psychologist is available, insight therapy may be the choice. However, the structures of the client and other characteristics of his dynamics will determine what is the better method. Rather than the seminary, a professional can best decide which method to utilize. Discussion between seminary personnel and the therapist before therapy begins may be useful for mutual understanding of goals.

Vocational Growth Sessions

What are vocational growth sessions? Built on solid Christian anthropology,[7] this method of professional assistance includes the following concepts:

1) The person is first of all created and called by God to a certain vocation, and in the case of religious/priestly vocation, a response is asked of life commitment in a faith perspective;

2) An integration of psychodynamic processes within the candidate includes consistency between the ideal self which includes theocentric self-transcendent goals, and the actual self which includes conscious as well as subconscious elements;

3) Subconscious needs may often hinder internalization of proclaimed values, or distort, color, and make selective the theocentric values;

4) These psychodynamics apply to all "normal" people. The number, kind and intensity of the inconsistencies between the ideal self as proclaimed, and an adaptive, supportive actual self may be the cause or root of various phenomena. These include dropping out, difficulty in living celibacy, or poverty, or obedience, "early retirement" and effectiveness in ministry;

5) The method of vocational growth sessions includes individual sessions with a professional psychologist-formator. The "formator" assists the seminarian in dealing with the conscious individuation of precise goals related to the vocational call. Together they come to focus on the blocks which prevent one from achieving or moving effectively toward that vocational goal. This is done by delving into those aspects of the unconscious, e.g., needs and defenses, as well as one's past and present, which maintain a "vicious circle" of frustration in the pursuit of theocentric values. New ways of handling emotion, needs, defenses, conflict, are attempted and become part of the psychodynamic repertoire. A new freedom is possible;

6) This is a "pedagogical," "preventive" and/or "adjustive" function of psychology, and is particularly useful in a vocational setting because of its more comprehensive anthropology which directly touches the essence of the priestly call and life.

Group Psychotherapy

Is group psychotherapy of help in the seminary? When individuals are in a vocational growth process, and exhibit inconsistencies which involve peer interaction and growth in socialization, group psychotherapy may be a very effective adjunct to individual therapy. Once the seminarian has come to see his fear regarding negative feelings or too intense positive feelings, e.g., in relation to peers, and has begun to understand the intrapsychic sources and psychogenetic roots of these feelings, a group experience may be warranted.

A word of caution should be offered here. Indiscriminate choice of or suggestion to seminarians to enter into a group experience when they are not yet able to at least partially handle their own conflicts effectively, may be more deleterious than salubrious. There should be some rudimentary signs of human identity characteristics and Christian values which will make the probability of group interaction a success.

If the group psychotherapist is the same as the individual therapist some particular gains may be made, since the dynamics of the seminarian which emerged in the group can be reviewed in the individual sessions. If the two "formators" are not one and the same person, and if the seminarian is open to collaboration between the two "formators," and provides the proper waivers, professional contact between the group therapist and the individual therapist might also be helpful.

Group Counseling

If we accept the definition of "counseling" suggested above, i.e., counseling as a more directive intervention with advice offered to assist problems which do not require in-depth exploration, we can apply this same definition to the atmosphere of group counseling.

Opportunities for group counseling may emerge when a group as a whole seeks orientation into the processes, expectations and methods of the theologate, for example. If group interactions in class become disruptive or self-oriented, some group counseling may be indicated. Group counseling is also the method used in some seminaries for children of alcoholics, for abused seminarians and for single parent seminarians. Often-times, however, with time in the group setting, the dynamic processes move into a more insight-oriented group process than mere counseling. This again depends on the capacity of the group members to handle stress and anxiety, control impulses and maintain a sense of self. The adoption of group methods in counseling also depends on how much the seminarians feel that the traumas or stress situations are touching their effectiveness in prayer, academics and social relatedness. If they are willing to invest more of themselves, the group goal and process will take shape also from this necessity, and may go beyond counseling to a deeper group therapy.

Psychopharmacology

Biological therapies which include pharmacological intervention, electroconvulsive therapy (ECT), phototherapy (noted often as light therapy) and psychosurgery are most effective for clients with psychiatric disorders. The biological basis of some mental disorders is well researched, and years of psychiatric practice have indicated the effectiveness of many psychotherapeutic drugs. The major divisions of psychotherapeutic drugs are: antipsychotics, antidepressants, antimanics, anxiolytics and hypnotics. These psychopharmacological methods of treating patients are generally oriented to those tending to, or already in psychotic episodes, those with severe neuroses or character disorders. Thus we are speaking here of that dimension of psychopathology, where clients:

—have difficulty maintaining a constant sense of self (identity);

—have difficulty testing the objectivity of reality;

—may have difficulty with impulse control;

—may not easily maintain anxiety tolerance;

—have few effective sublimatory channels for their conflicts and emotions;

—cannot maintain stable relationships with others (object relations);

—live much of their lives in an infantile defensive manner.

It is presumed that by an adequate screening these candidates would not be admitted to theological studies. If, by chance, some have been admitted and have personality disorders which warrant psychopharmacological treatment, the following courses should be considered:

1) The rector and formation personnel responsible for the seminarian should be informed by the seminarian, possibly in a joint meeting with the psychiatrist, of the nature and course of the treatment;

2) Decisions as to continuity in the seminary will depend on the severity of the pathology involved, the prognostic factors, possibility of re-occurrence in the future, and the client's willingness to sustain the treatment as long as necessary. Generally long or life-term intense pharmacological treatments are indications of more severe pathologies which would not be accepted for ordination, nor for theological studies;

3) If there are indications of psychogenetic psychopharmacological treatments (treatment of parents or siblings) in the past,

the probability of the need for this treatment for the present client should be carefully investigated;

4) The most optimistic prognosis would exist for a candidate who was placed on pharmacological treatment due to a transient stress reaction, has recovered well, and is no longer in need of the drug;

5) In the seminary, should any candidate find need of psychopharmacological intervention while pursuing his studies, or during the course of psychological intervention, certain factors should be considered regarding further continuance in the formation program. These include the extent of regression in the psyche, the seriousness of the cause of the regression, the ability to re-integrate with the medication, the time necessary for stabilization and effective functioning. The fewer the regressions, the less infantile the regression itself, the longer the intervals between regressions, and the greater the insights achieved during them are rather positive factors.

Frequent regressions of an infantile type which tend to linger into days and weeks, with little insight being gained during and after these regressions indicate a rather negative prognosis.

With these concepts in mind, the question arises: under what conditions should psychological assistance be offered BEFORE entrance into the seminary and in what situations should this help be offered DURING the theological or pre-theological studies?

PSYCHOLOGICAL HELPS BEFORE ENTRANCE INTO THE SEMINARY

Screening processes before admission to a seminary will include a battery of tests, the analysis of these tests and an extensive and in-depth interview. The importance of this interview cannot be underestimated.

When the screening procedures have been completed, and there is a rather clear indication that the candidate has a serious pathology such as psychosis, borderline or severe neurosis or primitive character disorder, psychotherapy or pharmacotherapies may be indicated. If the disorder is of a psychotic or prepsychotic dimension, psychopharmacology may in most instances be the treatment of choice. Supportive therapy, or long-term in-depth therapy, or long-term pharmacological therapy should be entered into BEFORE entrance into the seminary, if there will be any entrance at all. Only after a good number of years if there is an exceptional progression in identity formation and stabilization, might some of these candidates be considered as POSSIBILITIES. However, despite the fact that these serious types of disorders may somewhat benefit from psychological help, they may yet not attain to that stability of intrapsychic structures, that integration of actual and ideal self that the stresses of priestly vocation will require for effectiveness.

Some seminaries have insisted that psychological help be obtained BEFORE entrance in the following instances:

—unresolved addiction to alcohol, drugs, sex;

—unresolved abuse as a child, which interferes with one's present functioning;

—serious repetitive behaviors which are incompatible with community living and priesthood;

—problems of identity diffusion;

—pathologies related to family dysfunctions;

—serious developmental deficits;

—children of severe alcoholics or alcoholics themselves who have not come to adaptive terms with their addiction and its effect on their life direction;

—character disorders, serious psychopathology;

—incomplete mourning or grief work;

—situations when therapy needs to be the primary focus of the person.

PSYCHOLOGICAL HELPS AFTER ENTRANCE INTO THE SEMINARY

When are psychological helps indicated AFTER entrance into a seminary setting?

First, from a *pedagogical* viewpoint, vocational growth sessions as a consistent method of formation may be effective in leading toward a priestly identity. They can be made available to those students who may want to delve more deeply into themselves to free themselves of blocks to internalization of their values. These regular encounters focus on human issues and dynamics. They also include dealing with the ideals one wishes to live and to which one is called by God.

Vocational growth sessions in some ways differ from psychotherapy. The general goal of psychotherapy is "to relieve a patient's emotional distress and to help modify personality characteristics that are preventing the person from realizing his/her human potential or from enjoying rewarding interpersonal relationships."[8] The goal of psychotherapy is primarily symptom relief, helping a person to understand himself/herself more completely, and in many cases to re-organize or re-structure one's personality to achieve symptom relief. Thus psychotherapy may be for the most part curative or remedial.

On the other hand, the goal of vocational growth sessions is, through a process of ever-deepening self-awareness and self-ownership, to help a seminarian internalize the self-transcendent values of Christ. They also assist him in growing in the natural values which relate to his personality and which are involved in his interpersonal, vocational relationships. The seminarian is thereby helped toward personal integration of his psychodynamics for effectiveness in his ministry as a priest.

Whom would these sessions benefit? In-depth vocational growth sessions would benefit anyone who wishes to find the sources of his attitudes, the hierarchy of his values, and the core central needs and defenses which may subconsciously orient him in certain ways. Faculty and seminarians, and formation personnel in particular, would benefit from these sessions. The human, spiritual and ministerial identities may be formed to different degrees, but are always in the process of being completed and deepened.

Students with mild pathological problems may find help in these sessions. Because of the scarcity of people prepared to do this type of work, these could readily be handled also by psychotherapists.

In addition, seminarians who experience the death of a loved one, particularly a tragic death, would benefit from psychological help in the mourning process while in the seminary. Seminarians who are having difficulty detaching from the past, who tend to live in the past more than the present are also candidates for psychological help in the seminary.

Other situations which might warrant psychological help include:

—adjustment from pre-theology to theology; adjustment from departure from lay life to the seminary;

—situational disasters as a possible suicide in the seminary, or tragic death of a friend;

—death or change of a long-term spiritual director;

—recovering alcoholics who wish to deepen their self-knowledge;

—recovering addicts who yet wish to understand the sources of their addictive trends;

—those whose personalities are harsh and off-putting, who lack friends;

—those who complain of loneliness or boredom, and have no constructive way of handling these;

—those with failures in academics, or very inconsistent results;

—those who develop rather dependent and exclusive relationships;

—those who are consecutively late or absent from prayer, classes and the like;

—those who always shy away from participation in group functions;

—those with problems in community living;

—those who are overwhelmed with friendships they cannot let go of for study, prayer, formation purposes;

—those who have no friends, and tend to be loners;

—those who have difficulty expressing themselves, or those who are fearful of retribution for their self-expression;

—those who tend to avoid authority figures out of fear, or those who are constantly angry with authority;

—those with fears or intense frightening sexual tendencies;

—those who masturbate and wish to stop;

and the list could go on.

Recommendations may come from various sources. If there is a supportive faculty who affirm the benefits of vocational growth sessions, they may wish to encourage students to enter sessions for deeper self-knowledge. Spiritual directors may wish to send their directees for help when they notice repetitive behaviors which are not ameliorated by prayer, sacrifice and ascetical means. The rector may come to know certain limitations in a seminarian, and suggest such assistance. Professors may understand that problems in class and methods of study may be more deeply rooted than deficiencies in cognitive or organizational capacity. Any member of the faculty may pick up signs of unrest in the seminarian, and after discussion with him, understand that there is something beyond the immediately apparent disturbs the seminarian. Peers, perhaps more than any others, may be helpful in assisting each other to grow. They might suggest professional help, with love and genuine care. Beyond all these, a seminarian himself may come to seek professional assistance of his own accord.

If the recommendations for professional help are made formally by the rector and the faculty, responsibility should be taken by the rector to see that the recommendation is indeed followed through. This is to insure that the seminarian is not only participating in the sessions, but is sincerely doing his utmost to cooperate. A simple statement requested from the psychologist which indicates that the seminarian is participating in and cooperating with the process, would be sufficient. Further information regarding the seminarian's progress might be requested at intervals. In all such instances, confidentiality is to be respected and appropriate waivers signed.

Limitations of Counseling/Therapy/ Vocational Growth Sessions

The limitations of counseling as an in-depth means to facilitate human, spiritual and ministerial maturity have been discussed above. While it may be useful for some types of problems which are conscious and need an immediate solution, this does not generally reach the sources of traits, behaviors, tendencies, inconsistencies which make living of the proclaimed values of priesthood difficult.

How much can be expected in terms of gain in maturity through the processes of psychotherapy and vocational growth sessions? This depends on a number of factors.

1) If the therapist is not adept at dealing with religious or priests, effectiveness will be compromised. If the therapist has unresolved personal conflicts as regards the call to ordination, the call to celibacy, or obedience, the conflicts of the client may be addressed in a biased, non-comprehensive manner.

2) If the seminary faculty are ambivalent toward professional help in general, or are ambivalent toward a particular professional dealing with the seminarians, and if a faculty member consciously or unconsciously communicates that ambivalence to the seminarian, the basic trust of the seminarian for the professional may be compromised, and the sessions may never reach the depth they should to be truly effective.

3) If peer pressure is such that anyone entering into personal professional help is harassed or looked down upon, this may present an added conflict to an already burdened self, and the effectiveness of the sessions may be impaired.

4) If the seminarian is not grounded in some faith experience, lacks tolerance for anxiety, or tends to be childishly dependent, the progress of the sessions will be slowed, and prognosis is guarded.

5) When a traumatic early childhood experience is at the basis of present problems or tendencies, and these experiences occurred repetitively and/or before the client achieved capacity for self-expression through language or through autonomous self-assertion, prognosis is guarded.

6) When familial disorders are of such gravity and intensity that they undermine the seminarian's peaceful attempt to distance and deal with his own issues, prognosis is guarded.

7) When the "presenting problem" is actually the "tip of the iceberg," in that it covers more severe psychopathology of long-standing proportions, and if other serious psychotherapeutic attempts have been taken to resolve these and have failed, prognosis is poor.

8) If the seminarian cannot maintain long-term relationships, especially in moments of insecurity, of darkness, of fear, and has a history of changing spiritual directors, friends, and psychotherapists, prognosis is poor.

However, psychotherapy and vocational growth sessions, given all the necessary variables to assist them, may be effective pedagogical (or curative) tools for growth in maturity. Experience and research over the last 25 years since such an integrated approach has been in effect, has indicated that for a majority of "normal" but not severely inconsistent seminarians, this help is indeed effective and long-lasting. But let us not make idols of this help. Only in conjunction with solid modeling and assistance from others on the same journey, be they faculty or peers, will the sessions be most effective. Only when the seminarian is able to "try kneeling, for long-standing problems," that is, to bring his problems to reflective and intercessory prayer, and work through those issues discussed in session, will the deepest internalization occur.

What happens when the seminarian has completed his sessions? If there are still limits in his personality which would seriously jeopardize effective and exemplary ministry, a decision must be made by the seminary as regards his not continuing in formation. Unresolved authority problems, sexual identity issues, paranoid aggressive tendencies, or narcissistic grandiosity trends warrant serious concern, and firm decisions. It should be understood that sessions of professional help take time to root, to work through, to become part of a re-structuring in the person. If, however, within a reasonable time, these issues are not showing clear signs of diminishing, or of clearly moving toward practical resolution, some arrangements should be made for delay (if the prognosis indicates more time will most likely lead to resolution), or dismissal, or withdrawal by the seminarian himself.

If dismissal or withdrawal seems to be indicated, all compassion and understanding should be accorded the seminarian. In no way should he be made to feel he has been "bad" or "did not live up to the expectations" of the rector or faculty. When therapies and/or vocational growth sessions are ineffective it is usually NOT because the seminarian has not made a concerted conscious effort to enter into the process (especially if he has personally sought the help). Rather it is because there are primitive structures, long-standing traumas to the self, and such a rigid hold of the subconscious on the person that the client cannot go beyond these interior barriers. Like medicine, psychology has made great strides. However, like medicine, there are limitations inherent in the science, in the patient, in the practitioner.

PROCEDURAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL HELP IN THE SEMINARY

Choosing a Counselor/Therapist/ Vocational Growth Therapist

The choice of a counselor, a therapist or a vocational growth therapist will depend on a number of factors.

1) Is the client in need of temporary advice for a current problem which has neither a long-standing history nor deeper subconscious roots? A counselor would be the choice here, since dealing with conscious elements would suffice for the time-limited problem.

2) Is the seminarian presenting some signs of personality disorder, vocational crisis, or signs of regression in the seminary setting? A psychotherapist or vocational growth therapist might be indicated here.

3) What criteria should one look for in choosing a counselor, but more especially a therapist or vocational growth therapist? A few characteristics of a psychotherapist who should be able to handle most problems of seminarians would be:

—a man or woman of faith and belief in God, who practices that faith and knows the questions and asceticism required by it;

—a therapist who, although non-Catholic, has a very deep and clear understanding of the structure and theology of the Catholic faith, particularly of the call to vocation, and its FAITH dimension. He/she should be open to support those values as norms which go beyond his/her lived competency or jurisdiction;

—a therapist who has knowledge of and insight into deeper aspects of the dynamics of the person (the unconscious) and has worked extensively in that area;

—a therapist who is particularly knowledgeable in the theology and practice of priestly and seminary life, and committed to it;

—a vocational growth therapist who, as a member of a religious institute or presbyterate, has first-hand experience of the ideals, the struggles, the cost, the personal asceticism and conflicts involved in such environments;

—a therapist or vocational growth therapist who has had sufficient academic training (Ph.D., or M.A. or M.S.W.), as well as clinical externship and internship in the specific age level dealt with;

—a therapist or vocational growth therapist who has undergone psychotherapy. This minimizes the possibility of projecting personal biases or conflicts onto the client. It also provides first hand experience of the inner struggle that exists in every person who goes through a serious and effective therapy;

—a therapist/vocational growth therapist who respects the teachings of the church and the values proposed by it;

—a vocational growth therapist or therapist who has a clear knowledge of a comprehensive Christian anthropology, and its implications in the dynamics of the person;

—a vocational growth therapist or therapist who has sufficient and varied experience in dealing with priests, sisters, seminarians.

A final question: Can the psychologist who did the screening be the same one who takes the candidate or seminarian into therapy or vocational growth sessions? There does not seem to be anything objectively speaking which might warrant the necessity of a change from the tester to another therapist. If, however, the candidate's alliance with the tester is less than objective, particularly if it is highly negative, the probability of a successful outcome in therapy/vocational growth sessions might be compromised.

It should also be considered that a tester would need to be quite confident that he/she has reached the deepest and most comprehensive analysis of the candidate, with goals which are related to that comprehensive data. If the testing has been only partial, therapeutic goals might be narrowed down, and may not reach the depths of the problems of the candidate. There are instances where the same tester and therapist have achieved optimal results in both. There are instances where this has not been most effective.

In-House Professional or Professional Outside the Seminary

In-House Professional Psychologists/Therapists

Should the seminary have a professional of its own for this in-depth therapeutic/vocational growth assistance?

There are many benefits which can be accrued by having an in-house professional psychologist/therapist/formator in the seminary. The immediate availability of a person who is known by the seminarians, evaluated by them, and often trusted by them can make it easier for seminarians to ask for assistance when needed. There may be questions on the part of the seminarians as to "what communication does the professional have with the authorities."

This can be allayed by an initial conference which presents the views and anthropology of the professional together with a discussion of confidentiality.

At the same time, the administration and faculty will be aware of the procedures and goals of the professional, and may more easily develop confidence in him/her, knowing what competence the professional brings to the formation of the seminarian.

An in-house professional would have the advantage of knowing first-hand the directives and policies of the institution, as well as knowing the faculty and staff. He/she would also have the opportunity to know the seminarians. This understanding of the situational factors can assist him/her to more easily be objective and clear in addressing the seminarian's problems.

An in-house professional therapist/vocational growth therapist can also be of assistance to the faculty and administration in composing policies regarding therapy and counseling, providing consultation in needed situations and, providing professional assistance to faculty members at their request.

Professional Assistance from Outside the Seminary

There are instances when professional psychotherapeutic or vocational growth assistance might well be done better by someone outside the seminary. If the faculty and administration are uncomfortable with or feel threatened by the presence of the psychologist in their midst, or if they lack confidence in the professional, it would be better that the seminary seek such help from outside. If there is mistrust of psychology in general, this would most likely render any professional assistance of little value.

The effectiveness of professional intervention and assistance in any seminary will depend to a great degree on the support of the faculty. Seminarians are quick to perceive and identify with, or heartily disagree with attitudes of authority figures, including faculty. When they sense that some faculty do not have confidence in those who are in the professional-formator role, this may have deleterious effects in the seminary.

There are occasions when a seminary does not choose to have an in-house professional formator (psychologist). There are also situations where a suitable professional cannot be found who is willing to commit himself/herself to this task. In these cases the only option is to recommend outside assistance.

The Issue of Confidentiality

It might be useful here to present the American Psychological Association Ethical Principles which relate to Confidentiality (Principle 5).[11]

> **Confidentiality**
>
> General Principle:
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> Psychologists have a primary obligation to respect the confidentiality of information obtained from persons in the course of their work as psychologists. They reveal such information to others only with the consent of the person or the person's legal representative, except in those unusual circumstances in which not to do so would result in clear danger to the person or others. Where appropriate, psychologists inform their clients of the legal limits of confidentiality.
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> Principle 5a:
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> Information obtained in clinical or consulting relationships, or evaluative data concerning children, students, employees and others, is discussed only for professional purposes and only with persons clearly concerned with the case. Written and oral reports present only data germane to the purposes of the evaluation, and every effort is made to avoid undue invasion of privacy.
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> Principle 5b:
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> Psychologists who present personal information obtained during the course of professional work in writing, lectures, or other public forums either obtain prior consent to do so or adequately disguise all identifying information.
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> Principle 5c:
>
> Psychologists make provisions for maintaining confidentiality in the storage and disposal of records.

Another ethical principle of the APA which is related to our discussion is under the rubric “Welfare of the Consumers”

> Principle 6b:
>
> When a psychologist agrees to provide services to a client at the request of a third party, the psychologist assumes the responsibility of clarifying the nature of the relationships to all parties concerned.

In the case of a *mandatory* referral for professional help, the psychologist must first, with the consent of the seminarian, ascertain the reasons for referral, and the expectations of the rector or advisor or director who made the referral, regarding reports or communication regarding progress.

While the psychologist underlines the necessity of confidentiality during the sessions with the seminarian, some triadically agreed upon solution of responsible administrative follow up must be arranged. In all cases, appropriate waivers must be signed. A rector or advisor may simply ask for a written statement from the psychologist periodically indicating:

—whether the person has indeed initiated sessions;

—whether the person is cooperating adequately with the process, or not;

—whether some positive effects are becoming evident.

This request may be made periodically until the completion of therapy/growth sessions. A statement that the seminarian has successfully completed his vocational growth sessions or psychotherapy may be added, with the date and signatures of psychologist and seminarian.

A necessary breach of confidentiality would occur if the psychologist ascertains that the seminarian is in danger of serious harm to himself or others. If the seminarian has a history of suicide attempts, or planned suicide threats with at least some semblance of attempt to fulfill them, this must be made known to the appropriate persons. Homicidal tendencies would fall into the same category. When there might be danger to third parties, it may be necessary to notify civil authorities. The question of homosexual activity in the seminary, within the knowledge of the therapist, is a very delicate issue. Without the consent of the seminarian, this information cannot be brought to the open forum.

One manner of dealing with this situation is to attempt to challenge the seminarian to disclosure, or encourage his partner to the same (if he is known professionally to the therapist, and has also brought it to the sessions). A consultation with the spiritual director, with the agreement of the seminarian, might assist in urging the seminarian to comply with the directives and policies of the seminary, for his own peace of mind and conscience, and for the good of the church. This would provide him with time and distance to work out the problem professionally, in an in-depth manner. If the seminarian insists on not bringing the matter to the fore, the best the therapist may be able to do is to choose to discontinue therapy with the client. He may indicate that he cannot in conscience proceed with a collaboration in a serious and potentially harmful violation of the institution's policies, as well as continued harm to himself.

If professional help is being sought *of one's free accord* without the knowledge of the rector or advisors, confidentiality extends not only to the fact that the seminarian is being seen by the therapist, but also to the content discussed. The rector and the therapist should have a pre-arranged agreement that any student who seeks professional help voluntarily would be seen, if possible, by the therapist of his choice, and no record is to be made of this for the seminary. However, if in the course of therapy the seminarian comes to see that openness and acknowledgment to the rector of his decision to seek professional help would be a salutary thing for him, this should be discussed with the therapist and a prudent decision made in that regard.

In all cases, the material which emerges from the professional sessions with the seminarian (or candidate) remain the property of the therapist/vocational growth counselor, and are to be kept in confidential files.

Financial Responsibility

The issue of financing professional assistance hinges on a number of factors:

1) Does the diocese or religious institute pay for the tuition of the seminarians?

2) How strongly do the administrative team of the seminary believe in the necessity and usefulness of this help for formation? How much is it an integral part of their formation program?

3) What financial resources are available to the particular seminarian?

4) How does the formation team as well as the seminarian perceive psychological assistance in formation? Is it perceived as a useful pedagogical tool or is it perceived as a necessity for "disturbed" seminarians?

5) If seminarians are encouraged to seek professional assistance, how will payment for services affect their willingness to enter into such sessions?

6) Does the seminary have an in-house professional, paid by the diocese, religious institute or the seminary?

If the candidate is asked to seek professional help BEFORE entrance into the seminary, the issue of finances is clear enough. Normally, he is responsible to provide for the financing of that assistance. In the case of a very indigent candidate who would have no means for this assistance, other factors should be considered. If the candidate seems promising in every other manner, and if the prognosis for satisfactory growth through personal assistance is good, the seminary might do well to offer payment, or partial payment. This may be done with the understanding that if he does not enter, or should leave, this would be paid back in full. A written agreement would be suitable in this situation. If the candidate is seriously disturbed, and prognosis is less favorable, financial responsibility might better be left to the candidate, with no assurance that he would necessarily be accepted after a certain time in psychotherapy.

If the candidate is required to enter into psychotherapy or vocational growth sessions DURING the seminary, and if the seminary has an in-house professional prepared to deal with the seminarians, the situation may be simpler. If the seminary pays the salary of the professional, it would seem reasonable that the seminarians are offered this help without charge. It has been argued that if this is done, the seminarians may not "appreciate" all that is being done for them, that this is keeping them "infantile" and "dependent" on father figures. The fact is that the process of psychotherapy/vocational growth is itself intended to assist the seminarian to move through the different developmental stages. If this is accomplished, not only will the seminarian not remain "dependent" and narcissistically use the institution, but he most likely would grow into a deep spirit of gratitude for freedom which he himself could not attain with his own resources.

The financing of the professional help by the seminary also indicates how seriously the seminary takes the formation process. The attainment of comprehensive and deep "self-knowledge" and effective internal freedom which will assist in living out priestly virtues, is made clear to be a goal of formation. Vocational growth sessions, added to the other sources of growth as academics, spiritual direction and field education may be made available as an opportunity to "synthesize" and to personally internalize the spirit of Christ.

Seminaries, dioceses and religious institutes spend considerable time and money to provide for excellence among professors in the various theological disciplines necessary for priesthood. Is it not just as imperative that formators be prepared in an in-depth way, both personally and professionally to assist growth in that indispensable maturity for an effective priesthood? Contemporary cultural and sociological situations have prompted serious concern about the "immaturity" of priests who enter into the seminaries and often (as research has indicated), leave the seminary with a minimum of growth in maturity. Research also indicates that even now, 15–20% of people, including seminarians, can be considered immature. Another 15–20% have been found to be pathologically inclined, to a more or less severe degree. Interestingly, of those who are considered "normal," that is 60–80% of the population, there are still indications of very "human" inconsistencies (conflicts) between their conscious "ideal self," that is, what they "wish" to do, and their less conscious (subconscious-latent) "actual self" of what they actually are able to do, or not do because of centrally dissonant needs and defenses.[10] Will the seminary be as eager to deal with these issues as it is with academics and pastoral preparation?

No one but the Creator knows fully the mind, the heart, the being of the seminarian. No one but Jesus is able, ultimately to address in its fullest dimensions, man's fearful, unstable heart, and heal it completely. No one but the Spirit can evoke those deepest pains rooted in the heart of man, and transform them into love. The psychologist/vocational growth formator is only a shadow of the healing, loving heart of a gentle, faithful God.

Pope John Paul II, in *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, calls for the development, integration and internalization of the seminarian's human, spiritual, intellectual and ministerial identities. This is an awesome and complex task. While this task is entrusted to all in the seminary, in a unique way it is the task of the professional formator to facilitate the synthesis of these identities.

Perhaps St. Paul's prayer for the progress of the Thessalonians is one which can be aptly made by both seminarian and formator working together to see God more clearly:

> We pray for you always that our God may make you worthy of his call, and fulfill by his power every honest intention and work of faith. In this way the name of Our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you and you in him, in accord with the gracious gift of our God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.
>
> (2Th 1:11-12)

Sister Joyce Ridick, SSC, a native of Worcester, Massachusetts, is a member of the Sisters of St. Casimir of Chicago. She received a Bachelor of Science Degree from De Paul University in Chicago and her Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1972. She became a faculty member of the Institute of Psychology of the Gregorian University and remained a professor full-time there for 17 years, and part-time for three more years. She was the first woman to become professor in the 500 year history of the Gregorian.

Sister Joyce returned to the United States in 1989. She spent two years as staff psychologist and formator at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit, Michigan. Presently she is Formation Assistant and Associate Professor at St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers.

In addition to teaching and writing, she has lectured widely in Europe, England, India, North America, especially on topics of formation, leadership, Christian anthropology and religious and priestly life. ❧

NOTES

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5

Psychological Screening of Candidates for Ordained Ministry

by Joseph P. O'Neill

❧ Psychological testing has been a part of the admission process of ministerial candidates by seminaries as well as by the governing bodies of many churches and faiths for a half century. This comparative analysis of test results shows the ways in which testing can be beneficial and gives cautions regarding the interpretation of tests of ministerial candidates. In particular, the finding that test scores vary from denomination to denomination and also during times of national crisis, is most helpful.

In *The Spiritual Life of Children*, Robert Coles tells of one of his early patients, an eight-year-old girl with strong religious convictions, whom he had trouble understanding. In his psychiatric training, Coles had been educated to view religion as a social lie rooted in an individual's need for self-deception. As Coles talked to the child, he kept interpreting her religious expressions as a smokescreen for sexual feelings. Indeed, one of his supervisors told him: "In a while she will talk to you about her sexual life, and all this religion talk will go away."[1] Despite that advice, Coles found that he was unable to help the child with her problems until he accepted her spirituality as an authentic expression of her personality.

Coles recognized that a child's self-awareness may be encoded in a religious symbol system, indeed that some of her experience could be expressed *only* through religious symbols. Coles' willingness to consider religious experience as an objective reality that is not reducible to some psychological need has not always been widely shared in his profession. The dominant tradition in modern psychology has been Freudian; and Freud, throughout his writings, saw religion as "the universal obsessional neurosis of humanity."[2] As a result, the discipline of psychoanalysis took on a tone of skepticism, even hostility, toward religion. Until recently, post-Freudian psychology has been more likely to interpret an intense religious experience—John of the Cross's dark night of the soul or St. Paul's mystical experience on the road to Damascus— as a sign of pathology rather than as a stage of spiritual development.

Even standardized psychological instruments with no discernible Freudian bias may give a negative interpretation to everyday religious practices. For example, to answer "True" to the item "I read in the Bible several times a week" would be scored as a statistically non-conforming response on the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI), one of the most commonly used personality inventories.[3] It is not surprising, then, that some religious traditions are uncomfortable with, if not hostile to, the use of such psychological instruments in assessing the validity of a call to ordained ministry.

Yet, both Christian and Jewish tradition set standards for those who are called to lead and teach in a community of faith. The Mishnah *Pirkei Avot* (The Wisdom of the Fathers) from the early 3rd century CE describes the process through which the aspiring rabbi may become the ideal scholar: "by study, by attentiveness; by orderly speech, by an understanding heart; by a perceptive heart; by awe; by fear; by humility."[4] And in the Christian tradition, St. Paul, in his epistle to Titus and in his first letter to Timothy, outlines the selection criteria for the religious leadership of a Christian community:

> A bishop must be above reproach, faithful to his one wife, sober, temperate, courteous, hospitable and a good

> teacher; he must not be given to drink, or a brawler, but of forbearing disposition, avoiding quarrels, and no lover of money (I Timothy 3, 2-4).[5]

Although neither St. Paul nor the Mishnah would have envisioned the use of a standardized instrument to assess religious leadership, both texts assume the use of selection criteria that go beyond an examination of outward behavior to a probing of character, attitude and intention. Today that ancient tradition remains intact. Candidacy procedures in most mainline Protestant denominations, in the Roman Catholic Church, and in American Judaism's Reform movement now require psychological testing as a condition for seminary admission. In a 1993 document on the education and spiritual formation of priests, the American Catholic bishops state that: "Seminary administrators should consider psychological assessment as an integral part of the admissions procedures."[6] In two surveys conducted in 1980 and 1990, more than 90 percent of Roman Catholic religious orders in the United States reported the use of such common instruments as the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI), the Rorschach and the Strong Interest Inventory (SII).[7] In a similar 1978 survey of screening practices in the United Methodist Church, 39 of the 52 church administrative units that replied were using psychological testing as part of the selection process, with the MMPI being the most commonly used instrument.[8] And, in the newly merged Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the MMPI and the SII are among the standard instruments recommended for use by the denomination's Division for Ministry in the assessment of candidates for ordination.[9]

In many denominations, candidacy procedures have become quite elaborate and may take from 18 months to two years to complete. Typically, candidates for ordination are required to make their intentions known to a regional committee for a preliminary interview. If allowed to continue after that interview, the candidate goes through a process of psychological screening and is interviewed at least once more by a mixed lay-clergy committee. If a committee feels a negative decision is likely, it is urged to discourage weak candidates early in the process, even before psychological testing has occurred.[10]

As an example, when the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago reviewed the progress of 183 candidates from 1972 to 1981,[11] the diocese found that 36 candidates withdrew on their own and that only 11 candidates, an average of about one a year, were judged unsuitable and asked to withdraw by the diocese's Commission on Ministry. It would be wrong to conclude, however, that voluntary withdrawals were three times more common than involuntary ones. In their pastoral role, the Episcopal Church's Commissions on Ministry would try to exercise gentle persuasion and great tact to encourage unfit candidates to withdraw on their own rather than be asked to leave. Any increase in involuntary withdrawals could be considered a failure in the process of pastoral counseling.

STANDARDIZED INSTRUMENTS AND THEIR USE IN SCREENING CANDIDATES

This essay focusses on the epidemiology of mental health. It is an attempt (a) to describe what the MMPI, standardized personality inventory tell us about Protestant, Catholic and Jewish seminary applicants; (b) to assess how useful and reliable is the information such instruments provide; and (c) to describe how the information from these standardized instruments is actually used in the selection of candidates for ordination. We have assembled score profiles on these instruments for several thousand seminarians going back, in some cases, almost a half century. These profiles ordinarily include not only scores on personality inventories, but intelligence and aptitude tests, career interest inventories and such biographical data, as age, sex, birth order, level of formal education, and marital status. A majority of the profiles also include whether the applicant's parents were living at the time of application as well as parents' education, occupation and marital status. The most common standardized instruments in our files are shown in the table on the following page.

GENESIS OF PERSONALITY INVENTORIES

The grandfather of all personality inventories was created by R.S. Woodworth and his associates during World War I to identify inductees who might be prone to "shell shock."[12] Woodworth's 116 item questionnaire was culled from some 200 questions he thought to be symptomatic of psychoneurotic tendencies. He first tested

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Instrument	*Number of Cases*
California Personality Inventory	864
Clinical Analysis Questionnaire	1,362
Kuder Preference Record	870
Minnesota Interest Questionnaire	1,183
Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory	5,078
Myers-Briggs Type Indicator	4,405
Rorschach	1,535
Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire	2,822
Strong Interest Inventory	6,770
In addition to such instruments, we also have scores in our files of three inventories that were developed specifically for Christian clergy and professional church workers.	
Inventory of Religious Activities and Interests	4,628
Profiles of Ministry	4,105
Theological School Inventory	16,901

them on a group of Columbia University students and rejected any item where 25 percent of the students gave the "psychoneurotic" answer. He assumed that if so large a proportion of supposedly normal subjects could give the "psychoneurotic" answer, the question could not be symptomatic of psychological maladjustment. In constructing this list of items, Woodworth postulated the fundamental principle on which all subsequent personality inventories would be based. "While any single 'symptom'," he said, "appears in a proportion of normal persons, the accumulation of such symptoms is a sign of difficulty."[13] The war ended before Woodworth's instrument could be fully tested. But the idea of creating an easily administered psychological screening device was not abandoned. Immediately after the war, Woodworth and Poffenberger developed the Woodworth Personal Data Sheet, a self-rating scale for detecting neurotic individuals. The total number of positive answers resulted in a score that indicated whether the person should be interviewed individually by a psychiatrist. Some items were so indicative of pathology that a "yes" response to any of them prompted an individual review.[14]

Among the first to compile a list of symptoms specifically for screening candidates for the priesthood or the religious life was Thomas Verner Moore, a psychiatrist and Benedictine priest. In

1935, he conducted a nationwide survey of public and private mental institutions that asked: (a) how many of their patients were priests or members of a religious order; and, (b) what was the classification of their disorder? Moore's primary interest was in the epidemiology of mental illness. He had noticed that the proportion of divorced persons in mental hospitals was, in comparison with their presence in the general population, roughly twice that of the widowed and four times that of the married. Did similar patterns exist, he asked himself, for priests and nuns? Were they hospitalized more or less often than a single lay persons? Did lay and religious populations have different types of mental disorders?

Moore found that hospitalized priests and nuns were much more likely than other mental patients to be diagnosed as suffering from dementia praecox, a term used in the first half of this century to classify a set of symptoms that today would ordinarily be called schizophrenia. In Moore's sample, 44 percent of the hospitalized nuns were diagnosed as suffering from some form of schizophrenia whereas only 21 percent of other women patients fell into that category.[15] Given that schizophrenia was three times more prevalent among women who had entered cloistered orders than among noncloistered nuns, Moore speculated that "pre-psychotic personalities are attracted to the isolation of the cloistered life."[16] If, indeed, a disproportionate number of paranoid personalities seemed to seek admission to the priesthood,[17] Moore concluded that it would be reasonable to examine all applicants for entrance into a religious profession and he designed a checklist of prepsychotic symptoms that church authorities could use for the screening of candidates for the priesthood or religious life.

Interest in Moore's research tended to be more intense in the Catholic Church than in other denominations. A Catholic diocese or a religious order makes itself responsible for the lifetime care of a mentally-ill priest or member of an order with final vows. Despite some uneasiness about the secular bias of psychological inventories, many Catholic seminaries and religious orders in the period immediately after World War II were quick to adopt the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, an instrument designed for psychiatric hospital admissions. The original test format for the MMPI was published in 1943[18] and within a year it was in use in Catholic seminaries. As part of our research database, we have the files of one diocesan seminary that has kept an unbroken record of MMPI scale scores for its entering seminarians from 1944 to the present.

By the 1960's the seminaries of the United Methodist Church, a denomination that guarantees life-time employment to its fully accredited clergy, had adopted psychological assessment as a regular part of their admissions process.[19] Later in that decade, many of the Annual Conferences, the Methodist equivalent of a diocese, began to use psychological assessment prior to ordination. Catholic interest in personality inventories tended to focus on whether the candidate shows any signs of pathology, but the mainline Protestant denominations shifted their focus from the pathological to the dysfunctional: What elements in the candidate's personality would diminish effectiveness in ministry? This change in emphasis signaled a change in the use of the MMPI. Despite its original design as an instrument to measure the severity of a psychiatric disturbance, it was now being used to measure personality development within a normal population. Though many had doubts about the validity of this approach, its ubiquity was noted in the early 1970's by James Dittes of Yale Divinity School in a review of almost a thousand psychological studies of clergy. "Despite this flood of information," as Dittes put it, "almost nothing is confidently known about the distinctive personality characteristics of religious professionals."[20]

MINNESOTA MULTIPHASIC PERSONALITY INVENTORY

In use for almost 50 years, the original MMPI[21] was the most widely administered and most thoroughly researched of all personality inventories. Between 1943 and 1990, some 10,000 articles and books were published on its use and findings.[22] The original MMPI was a 566 item "true" or "false" test designed as a labor-saving device in the admission of patients to psychiatric hospitals. According to the reasoning behind the design of the MMPI, the more a client answers in a way that mental patients do, the greater the possibility that the client belongs in a pathological group and the smaller the probability that he or she is a member of a normal group.[23]

In one sense, the MMPI is merely a written psychological interview. Many of its items describe symptoms that a clinician would ask about in a face-to-face interview. But one of the reasons for the original MMPI's long life is that the great majority of its items (504 out of 566) are proven to be ones that psychiatric patients, on average, answer differently from a group of normal subjects. For example, "Much of the time my head seems to hurt all over," was answered "true" by 12 percent of a sample of those already diagnosed as hypochondriacs but by only four percent of a random normal population.[24] Most items, such as "I cry easily," are self-evident in their intent; but others are not intuitively obvious. For example, "I sometimes tease animals" is more likely to be answered "false" by clinically depressed subjects than normal ones even though, on the surface, the item's content does not appear to be related to depression.[25]

From a psychometric prospective, the designers of the MMPI made a deliberate effort to create a sharply discontinuous scale between a normal and an abnormal population. Scores within the normal range (T = 35 to T = 65) represent a random fluctuation within a normal population and may have little or no meaning. However, the client enters the zone of concern when his or her clinical scale scores are two standard deviations above the mean, represented as a T-score of 70+. But the MMPI cannot, without other evidence, distinguish between an elevated reading that is due to temporary stress and one due to some chronic condition. A clinician tries to distinguish between the two through other tests and interviews. But, just as blood pressure above 150/100 is cause for concern, a MMPI score of T = 70 or above is ordinarily called "elevated" and warrants further examination.

DISTRIBUTION OF CLINICAL SCALE SCORES

In scoring the MMPI, individual items are clustered into 10 scales corresponding to diagnostic categories—originally named "hypochondria," "depression," "hysteria," "psychopathic deviate," "paranoia," and so on, but now usually referred to by numbers 1 through 9. One of the clear findings of over 40 years of research on the MMPI is that certain populations have consistently different scale score patterns from those of other populations. The elderly, for example, are more likely to have lower scores on Scale 9 than college students. Prison inmates tend to have lower scores on Scales 1 and 3 than hospital patients. The chart below shows the number and percentage of Protestant, Catholic and Jewish seminary applicants in our MMPI database with an elevated score, i.e., at least two standard deviations above the mean, on at least one of the MMPI clinical scales.

	Protestant Male (N = 2317)		*Catholic Male (N = 1172)*		*Jewish Male (N = 704)*		*Total Male (N = 4193)*	
MMPI 1 Hs + .5K	102	4.4%	65	5.5%	14	2.0%	181	4.3%
MMPI 2 D	110	4.7%	81	6.9%	30	4.3%	206	4.9%
MMPI 3 Hy	115	5.0%	67	5.7%	34	4.8%	216	5.2%
MMPI 4 Pd + .4K	232	10.0%	102	8.7%	68	9.7%	402	9.6%
MMPI 5 Mf	914	39.4%	248	21.2%	481	68.3%	1643	39.2%
MMPI 6 Pa	108	4.7%	47	4.0%	33	4.7%	188	4.5%
MMPI 7 Pt + 1K	273	11.8%	176	15.0%	24	3.4%	473	11.3%
MMPI 8 Sc + 1K	275	11.9%	126	10.8%	34	4.8%	435	10.4%
MMPI 9 Ma + .2K	410	17.7%	124	10.6%	120	17.1%	654	15.6%
MMPI 0 Si	98	4.2%	8	2.5%*	5	0.8%	111	3.3%**

*Between 1944 and 1965, the Si scale was scored only intermittently. The percentages in the tables for Catholic seminarians is therefore based on 314 cases.
**Percentage based on 3335 cases.

	Protestant Female (N = 771)		*Jewish Female (N = 114)*		*Total Female (N = 885)*	
MMPI 1 Hs + .5K	10	1.3%	0	0.0%	10	1.1%
MMPI 2 D	12	1.6%	1	0.9%	13	1.5%
MMPI 3 Hy	33	4.3%	3	2.6%	36	4.1%
MMPI 4 Pd + .4K	63	8.2%	8	7.0%	71	8.0%
MMPI 5 Mf	6	0.8%	1	0.9%	7	0.8%
MMPI 6 Pa	40	5.2%	6	5.3%	46	5.2%
MMPI 7 Pt + 1K	46	6.0%	2	1.8%	48	5.4%
MMPI 8 Sc + 1K	109	14.1%	6	5.3%	115	13.0%
MMPI 9 Ma + .2K	126	16.3%	11	9.6%	137	15.5%
MMPI 0 Si	56	7.3%	0	0.0%	56	6.3%

MMPI scales 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9 merit some attention. The incidence of elevated scales is higher than one would expect from a normal population. By definition, with a properly normed instrument and a normal population, only 2.3 percent of that population would be at two standard deviations above the mean. Recent research points out that the original MMPI adult norms seem to have been based on an atypical sample and that the net effect of this misnorming has been to over-predict pathology[26] by about a half of a standard deviation, i.e., 5 points on a T-scale.[27] Even with this norming error, the difference between Catholic seminarians and their Protestant and Jewish male counterparts on scale 5, the "masculine-feminine" scale is especially striking. More than two-thirds of the Jewish and two-fifths of the Protestant seminary applicants had elevated scores on scale 5 as compared to one-fifth of the Catholics. The norms for scale 5 — as for all the other scales—were based on the responses of individuals with an average of eight years of general schooling living in the 1940's in small town and rural Minnesota. The original purpose of the Mf scale was to identify patients with confused sexual identity. This scale more than any other on the MMPI is influenced by the ambient culture. What yesterday might have been a male's "inappropriate" interest in the feminine—cooking, fine arts and dance—would today seem unexceptionable in a sophisticated urban professional.

Yet differences this large between Catholic seminarians and their Protestant and Jewish counterparts call for some attempt at explanation. Among the possible reasons for the higher proportion of elevated scores for Protestant and Jewish applicants is that they are, on average, older than their Catholic counterparts. The mean age of the Catholic seminarians was 21.6 years, the Protestants 27.3 and the Jewish 23.3. Almost all of the non-Catholic candidates had finished college prior to testing whereas many of the Catholic seminarians had not. Scale 5 scores tend to increase with education and cultural interests. By the mid 1970's and 1980's, scale 5 scores for Catholic applicants had increased along with their average age and with the years of education completed before entering seminary. Finally, the bulk of the Catholic seminarians were tested in the 1950's and 60's when items such as "I like to cook" would have been considered feminine in a way they would not in the 1970's and '80's when the majority of Protestant and Jewish students were tested.

On scales 7 and 8, both male and female Jewish seminary applicants show a significantly lower proportion of elevated scores than their Christian counterparts. Scale 7 measures levels of anxiety and compulsiveness and scale 8 is a measure of "schizophrenia." Since these two normal populations differ, as far as we know, only in their religious tradition, it would be tempting to explain the higher level of anxiety among Protestant and Catholic seminarians to an emphasis on sin, guilt and repentence in conservative Christian denominations.

On scale 9, the "hypomania" or psychic energy scale, Catholic seminarians have a lower proportion of elevated scores than either their Protestant or Jewish counterparts. This scale was designed to identify persons who are subject to cycles of euphoria and bursts of activity. As a rule of thumb, the younger the age group, the higher the average scores on scales 4 and 9.[28] But that rule does not obtain here. The Catholic seminarians in our database are younger than the Protestant and Jewish seminarians but, as a group, appear more self-effacing and controlled than their counterparts in the other religious traditions. One possible explanation of the difference is that Catholic seminaries in the pre-Vatican days are known to have placed a premium on obedience and conformity. This, perhaps, was reflected in the seminarians' MMPI responses.

TWO OR MORE ELEVATED SCALE SCORES

In the preceding section, we simply counted the number of those individuals with at least one elevated score. In this section, we will examine the clinical scale score patterns of those individuals who had two or more elevated scale scores. Over the five decades in which the original MMPI was in use, clinicians found that pairs of scales provided more insight than any single scale alone. Today, if a psychologist is told that an individual's high points are on scales 1 and 3 (usually shown as a graph along with the other scales), this is likely to conjure up the image of a patient who, when under psychological stress, will develop headaches or back trouble, perhaps to avoid responsibility for some task or activity. A 7/8 or 8/7 is likely to be someone who worries a great deal about small matters and has a hard time making up his mind; while an elevated 6/8 or 8/6 is likely to be suspicious and distrustful.[29] Pairs of "high" points can be either in a normal or abnormal range. If abnormal (T = 70 +), they are called "elevated." In the two charts below, we first give the number and percentage of those seminary applicants who had two +

or three + elevated scale scores.[30] And then we rank order the distribution of the 10 pairs that appear most frequently.

	Protestant Males (N = 2317)		*Catholic Males (N = 1172)*		*Jewish Males (N = 704)*	
2 + elevated scores	301	13.0%	186	15.9%	50	7.1%
3 + elevated scores	172	7.4%	94	8.0%	22	3.1%

TWO-POINT CODE-TYPES

	Catholic Males (N = 186)		*Protestant Males (N = 301)*		*Jewish Males (N = 50)*	
78/87	56	30.1%	39	13.0%	4	8.0%
27/72	19	10.2%	22	7.3%	3	6.0%
47/74	16	8.6%	19	6.3%	1	2.0%
89/98	13	7.0%	21	7.0%	6	12.0%
49/94	12	6.5%	32	10.6%	7	14.0%
13/31	9	4.8%	11	3.7%	2	4.0%
67/76	7	3.8%	7	2.3%	1	2.0%
48/84	5	2.7%	20	6.6%	4	8.0%
46/64	2	1.1%	6	2.0%	5	10.0%
38/83	1	0.5%	7	2.3%	4	8.0%

THREE-POINT CODE-TYPES

	Catholic Males (N = 94)		*Protestant Males (N = 172)*		*Jewish Males (N = 22)*	
278	19	20.2%	15	8.7%	2	9.1%
789	11	11.7%	11	6.4%	2	9.1%
478	10	10.6%	19	11.0%	1	4.5%
178	9	9.6%	7	4.1%	0	
678	6	6.4%	10	5.8%	0	
247	6	6.4%	6	3.5%	0	
123	5	5.3%	3	1.7%	1	4.5%
489	4	4.3%	7	4.1%	2	9.1%
479	2	2.1%	4	2.3%	0	
689	2	2.1%	6	3.5%	0	
348	0		1	0.6%	3	13.6%
172	2	2.1%	4	2.3%	2	9.1%

The dominance of scale 7 "anxiety" in the Catholic seminarian MMPI profile is noteworthy in a normal population. Of the 1172 young men tested in a 44-year period, 186 (15.9%) had two or more elevated scores—and, in 73 percent of those with elevated scores, scale 7 was one of the elevated scales. Even a norming error does not fully explain why a third of the elevated scale 7 scores were at T = 80 + . Since this is an essentially normal group of young men, one hypothesis we might consider is that this level of anxiety was caused by environmental factors.

A focus on personal sin and guilt was an essential element in the spiritual formation of American seminarians during most of the period for which we have MMPI data. *The Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius, widely used in seminarian retreats, were *meant* to produce anxiety about personal sin. Fear of damnation was part of the process of personal conversion. American Catholic moral theology of the 1940's and 50's developed an elaborate casuistry to distinguish mortal from venial sins and promoted a daily examination of conscience that often produced a certain level of psychological tension about one's sins. Release from this tension was produced by the practice of weekly confession and forgiveness of sins. If the religious ethos both created anxiety and provided the tools to manage it, it would not be surprising if individuals who were attracted to a piety based on anxiety might enter a religious profession. Nor would it be surprising that such a religious environment would induce feelings that appear pathological on a standardized instrument.

The Second Vatican Council shifted the focus of American Catholic religious practice from the individual's one-to-one relationship with God to the community as the People of God. Salvation, as a release from anxiety, was now being expressed in communitarian rather than individualistic terms. Religious disciplines, such as the individual confession of sin, that were used to manage anxiety in the past, now became a group ritual in many instances. In a 1970 survey of some 6,000 priests, half said they considered regular confession (at least monthly) as a very valuable exercise.[31] In a 1991 survey of 1,519 recently ordained priests, only two percent of the religious order clergy and five percent of the diocesan clergy reported going to confession on a weekly basis. Most of the clergy—40 percent of the diocesan and 38 percent of the religious order clergy—said they went to confession only once or twice a year; and four percent of the diocesan and six percent of the order priests reported that they never went to confession at all.[32] If the elevated level of anxiety among Catholic seminarians of the 1950's and '60's was an effect of their religious environment, once the tension over sin disappeared, the tools the church provided to manage that tension became superfluous. Our sample of 1,172 young men from one Catholic seminary is too small and too localized to do more than give rise to conjecture. But the large and sudden exodus from the priesthood and religious life in the years following the Second Vatican Council would not be inconsistent with a release from anxiety.

In an earlier section, we mentioned that it is difficult for the clinician to tell from the MMPI alone whether an elevated scale score is due to a passing episode or indicative of some chronic state. One advantage of collecting data over a 40-year period is that we know something of the life choices of those who, years before, were tested as entering seminarians. The chart that follows shows the distribution of elevated MMPI clinical scores for 1172 Roman Catholic seminarians over a 44-year period. It is further broken down by the individual's subsequent history into three categories: ordained and still active, ordained but resigned from the priesthood, and non-ordained. How well or badly did the MMPI predict persistence in an individual's calling?

	Ordination Status						*Total Cases*	
Number of male Catholic seminarians with one or more elevated scores	*Active (N = 597)*		*Resigned (N = 166)*		*Non-ordn (N = 409)*		*(N = 1172)*	
MMPI 1 Hs + .5k	32	5.4%	3	1.8%	30	7.3%	65	5.5%
MMPI 2 D	32	5.4%	9	5.4%	40	9.8%	81	6.9%
MMPI 3 Hy	25	4.2%	8	4.8%	34	8.3%	67	5.7%
MMPI 4 Pd + .4K	48	8.0%	12	7.2%	42	10%	102	8.7%
MMPI 5 Mf	144	24%	22	13%	82	20%	248	21%
MMPI 6 Pa	23	3.8%	7	4.2%	17	4.1%	47	4.0%
MMPI 7 Pt + 1K	82	14%	25	15%	69	17%	176	15%
MMPI 8 Sc + 1K	50	8.4%	14	8.4%	62	15%	126	11%
MMPI 9 Ma + .2K	55	9.2%	14	8.4%	55	13%	124	11%
MMPI 0 Si (314 cases)	5	2.9%	0		3	2.4%	8	2.5%
Total Cases of 1 + score	265	44%	65	39%	202	49%	532	45%

Others who have used MMPI data to predict seminary dropouts[33] have found that, as a group, seminary dropouts tend to have higher average MMPI scores than those who finish the course and are ordained. That pattern is repeated here. The non-ordained have a higher overall proportion of elevated scores than the ordained, especially on scales 2, 3, 8 and 9. These findings, however, are of little help for church officials who are attempting to evaluate individual applicants. What is predicted for the group cannot be predicted for the individual. While there is some association between higher scores and the propensity to drop out, the connection is too tenuous for practical application at the level of the individual. Higher average MMPI scores, however, had little or no correlation with resignation from the priesthood. Those who resigned have a lower percentage of elevated scores than either the ordained active or the non-ordained. But that lower percentage, when compared to the ordained active, is almost entirely attributable to scale 5 scores.

CHANGE IN THE NUMBER OF ELEVATED SCORES OVER TIME

In reviewing MMPI profiles from 1944 to the present, we found that individuals with two or more elevated scores tended to be clustered in certain time periods. In figure 5, the number of Catholic applicants with two or more elevated scores peaked in the years 1962–1964. At two Protestant seminaries where our data begin in 1962, the peak years for two or more elevated scores was 1970–1972. Without attempting to assert any causal connection, we merely note that the Second Vatican Council coincided with the upsurge of elevated scores among Catholic seminarians and the Vietnam War draft with the peak period for Protestant seminarians.

When such surges occur, the immediate question is: How many of those with two or more elevated scores graduated and were ordained? In examining the records of the Catholic seminary for the peak year when 18 seminarians—30 percent of those tested—had two or more elevated scores, we found that 13 never graduated. And of the five who did graduate and were ordained, only three are currently in active ministry. In other words, the seminary's system of quality control seems to have been reasonably effective. The same was not true for one Protestant seminary in our database where two-thirds (38 of 58) of male seminarians with two or more elevated scale scores graduated.

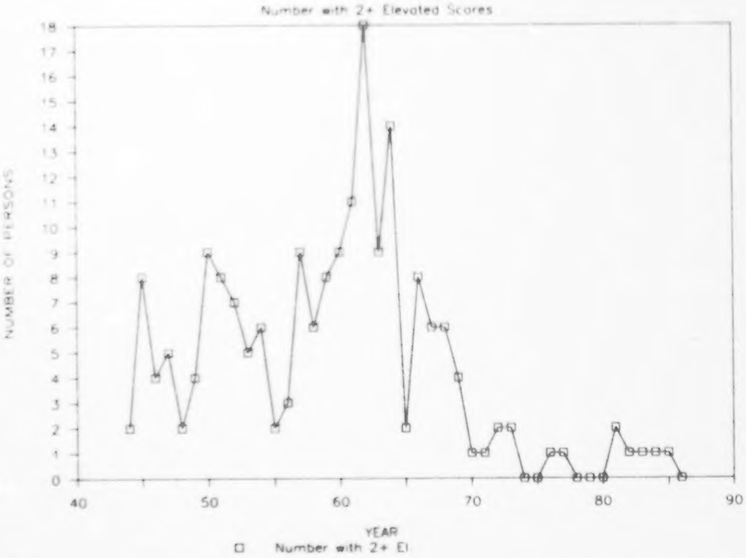

FIGURE 1 Number of Catholic Applicants with two or more elevated scores by year.

While the differences between the main faith traditions are somewhat readily discernable, making comparisons between seminarians of different Protestant denominations is much more difficult. The reason for caution is that some denominations—Southern Baptists, Disciples and Evangelical groups—screen candidates only after they are already enrolled as seminary students. While other denominations—e.g., Methodists, Lutherans, Episcopalians, and Presbyterians—have enacted detailed candidacy procedures in which applicants are pre-screened long before they are admitted to a seminary.

As a rule of thumb, those denominations that pre-screen their candidates have a significantly lower number of applicants with two or more elevated MMPI scale scores than those denominations that do not pre-screen. If the data we have gathered can be generalized, an average seminary of 250 students in a denomination that does not pre-screen its candidates can expect an average of 4 or 5 persons (10 to 15 percent) in each year's entering class to have 2 or more elevated scores on the MMPI. The denominations that do not pre-screen often have doctrinal reasons for avoiding the practice, especially those that are congregational in polity and emphasize God's direct relationship with the individual. Pre-screening is seen as a human barrier to God's call. And, in the denominations where the individual congregation calls and ordains whom it will, seminaries have no official role to play in the ordination decision. Thus, the seminary staff who are most likely to know which candidates suffer from some psychological disability have no official channels to communicate that knowledge to the ordaining body. These denominations should consider re-administering the MMPI in the semester before graduation, at least to those who entered with elevated scores.

In denominations that do pre-screen, an average seminary can expect one or two entering students each year (six to seven percent) will have elevated scores; and for most of these, their elevations are usually borderline and perhaps are due to inadequate MMPI norms. Among students at one Lutheran seminary, for example, eight out of 118 male candidates (6.8 percent) had two or more elevated scores over a ten-year period. In contrast, at two seminaries—one Catholic and the other Disciples of Christ—16 percent of the 1,172 Catholic seminarians and 19 percent of the 409 male Disciple students had two or more elevated scores. Lutheran students not only had fewer elevated scores but the elevations were much less severe when compared to seminarians who had not been pre-screened. Protestant women seminarians, no matter what their denomination, were likely to have fewer elevated scores than their male counterparts. In one population of 826 seminarians from three different seminaries, the percentage of men with two or more elevated clinical scores was, in each of the three seminaries, almost double that of women.

CONCLUSION

When R. S. Woodworth developed the first personality inventory, he applied a key test to his choice of items: he rejected any item where 25 percent of a normal group of college students gave the "psychoneurotic" answer. In that same spirit, we are concerned that the norms used to translate MMPI raw scores into T-scores on the original MMPI may have over-predicted pathology, especially when it was applied to seminarians from conservative theological traditions. As a working hypothesis, we suggest that the more a religious tradition places emphasis on personal sin, guilt, repentance and redemption, the more likely it is that the MMPI will produce elevated readings, especially on scale 7. Such readings may be more reflective of a cultural environment than of pathology.

Despite the three or four decades of a joint effort between denominational officials and professional psychologists to screen candidates for ordained ministry, it is not fully clear what effect the psychologist's report has on denominational decision-making. The dilemma was stated from the very early days in the use of the MMPI. In reviewing the results of four years experience with the MMPI in screening 211 men who had applied for admission to a religious order (Weisgerber 1964: 143–44), it was found that 15 of these men later became mentally ill; 6 had been flagged by the psychologist and 9 had not.

> Our tools [the MMPI] at present seem to be such that, if they are too rigidly applied, too many good candidates will be rejected; while, if they are rather benignly applied, too many unfit candidates will be admitted.
>
> These data [from the MMPI], meager as they are, suggest that the program misses on average two or three bad cases a year and catches one or two. When this result was presented to a major superior with the query whether it was worth all the man hours involved, he unhesitatingly replied that it was.[34]

Even though the opinions of professional psychologists are sought in the screening process, church committees retain the final say on who is to enter a course of studies and who is to be ordained. The clinician's report usually has its greatest impact during the early phase of candidacy[35] before an interviewing committee has gotten to know the individual. Once the committee has made its own personal assessment, the psychologist's opinion ordinarily tends to fade in importance, as one piece of evidence among others. The exception occurs when the committee itself feels uncomfortable with the candidate. Then the psychologist's report often becomes a convenient way to turn the candidate down. Rarely do committees allow the results of standardized instruments or the opinion of a third party to outweigh their own judgment. Of the 69 Catholic seminarians whom we know were asked to withdraw, only six had two or more elevated scores on the MMPI. At the Jewish seminary, GRE scores were much more predictive of acceptance or rejection than the MMPI. In a recent survey of ordination practices in the United Methodist Church, the church ordained 71 percent of those candidates for whom the psychologist recommended that ordination be deferred and 33 percent of those whom psychologists recommended be rejected without any reconsideration.[36]

When psychologists interpret the MMPI to lay committees, they should be sensitive to religious ethos. As a general principle, when essentially normal groups of seminary applicants differ significantly on an instrument like the MMPI, the reason is more likely due to culture than pathology. In effect, a new definition of what is "normal" should be worked out for each major religious tradition. Yet there is a body of thought that holds that the most effective way to use MMPI findings to predict performance in a particular professional field is to exclude everyone with very elevated scores on one or more of the clinical scales.[37] A blanket exclusion policy may be justified when screening applicants for very stressful positions where the potential risk to life or public safety is very high, e.g., air line pilots, air traffic controllers and police officers. But, in other settings, a policy of blanket exclusion, based solely on the MMPI, would ordinarily be a misuse of the instrument and unfair to applicants.

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6

Psychological Testing in Vocational Selection

by James J. Hennessy

❧ Significant contributions to seminary admissions procedures and continuing human development accrue from the appropriate use of the technologies of psychological science and practice. This chapter describes the benefits and limitations of a variety of psychometric instruments, many of which are currently used by vocation directors and seminary personnel.

Perhaps the most difficult question facing those responsible for making decisions regarding the acceptability of an applicant for any training, educational, or employment situation concerns the accuracy or correctness of those decisions. The issue of accuracy and correctness takes on greater importance as the decision-making involves admission into a socially-valued and highly selective organization, such as a program of priestly formation. The task of deciding who to admit and who to reject becomes even more difficult when the criteria for success extend to include a candidate's long-term performance in his ministerial role, a term that spans the individual's adult life-time. As one aid in this decision-making process, psychological assessments of applicants are conducted by professional psychologists, who use a variety of psychological tests to inform their recommendations to vocation directors and administrators. While the findings and recommendations from these assessments are not determinative of decisions made by seminary directors, those results generally are accorded great weight.

A recent survey conducted by the Seminary Department of the National Catholic Educational Association found that psychological assessment is used in the determination of readiness for theological studies by the vast majority of dioceses and seminaries in North America; clearly, psychology makes a major contribution to the selection task. The purpose of this chapter is to examine those contributions and to explain the benefits and limitations that may accrue from the appropriate use of the technologies of psychological science and practice. As a starting point, the paper will consider the general issue of prediction from recent work in Signal Detection Theory, particularly as developed and reported by John A. Swets (1992). Following this general discussion, the concepts underlying psychological assessment will be developed, followed by a discussion of principles and procedures of psychological testing. In the final section, the issue of decision-making on the basis of psychological tests will be examined in light of the principles discussed in the earlier sections. By that point, it is my hope that readers will appreciate the limitations on predictive accuracy that are inherent in psychological assessment and testing, and that you may also appreciate the contributions valid selection models can make to the task of identifying those individuals who are ready for theological training.

PREDICTION AND DIAGNOSIS

The process of decision-making used by vocation directors and admissions personnel can be conceptualized as a specific instance of a general prediction model in which forecasting some occurrence with a high degree of accuracy is the goal. Prediction implies that there is a relationship between two elements such that knowledge of the value or "score" on one element (the predictor variable) can lead to a probabilistic estimate of the value or "score" on the second (the criterion variable). In most instances the information that comprises the predictor variable is more readily available and less costly to obtain than is the information that comprises the criterion variable.

More specifically, some biographical or psychological information obtained through interviews or testing at the time a candidate applies for admission to a seminary may be related to that candidate's eventual performance in the seminary, and perhaps even in his later ministerial role. If such relationships can be found, great savings in many kinds of resources can be realized by basing admissions decisions on those known relationships. The institution need not undertake the costly endeavor of providing training and waiting until the time of ordination before discovering who among a class actually should be ordained. The elements in a prediction model can take many forms, such as the relationship between temperature and humidity in forecasting the probability of rain, or the relationship between heat in body tissue revealed through CAT scans and the presence of cancerous or other infected cells. The question that the forecaster or diagnostician faces is one of determining what the value or "score" on the first element must be to be reasonably assured that his/her prediction or diagnosis is accurate. In an ideal world the degree of association or correlation between the predictor variable and criterion variable would be perfect, and further, the criterion would be clearly known.

In the real world, unfortunately, those relationships are most often far from perfect because of both flawed predictors and vague, ill-formed criteria. As will be discussed below, psychological science has made great strides over the past 70 years in developing highly reliable (accurate and consistent) instruments generally referred to as "tests" that serve as predictor variables in prediction studies. Less progress has been made in understanding the meaning of performance on those tests in terms of the psychological constructs, traits, or characteristics they measure (i.e., the construct validity of tests) and in terms of how differences in performance on those tests are related to differences in performance in real-life settings, such as success in a seminary program. Not all of the problems in prediction, however, rest with the tests used; an equally compelling difficulty can be found in attempting to explicate in clear, unambiguous terms, the indicators of success on the criterion variable. My search of the literature, for example, yielded no unambiguous definition of the characteristics required of a successful seminarian or of a successful priest. In the absence of definable criteria, even nearly perfectly reliable psychological tests will be of little value in decision making. These issues will be explored more fully below, after a brief review of signal detection theory.

Signal Detection

Signal detection theory and research has as its goal the improvement in the accuracy of diagnostic or predictive procedures. The basic concern is to determine, based on some information available, whether or not some condition is present, where the condition or signal is the criterion of interest. It seeks to assess the relationship between the information on hand (e.g., scores on psychological tests) and the criterion (successful performance as a seminarian or priest) in a manner that maximizes "correct" decisions and minimizes errors. As with other scientific prediction models, signal detection is a probabilistic model that recognizes that neither the predictor nor criterion is measured with perfect accuracy; the decision-maker must choose, in effect, how much inaccuracy to permit in the selection process, and to decide then in which direction those errors would be least costly.

Consider the situation in which a candidate is tested on some psychological test. His score is compared to some standard that may or may not have some empirical basis. That standard often is scores on the same test obtained by other candidates at some earlier time. Many (but not all) candidates who successfully completed their seminary program scored above some "cut-score," while those who were not successful, generally, but not always, scored below that point. If the current candidate's score is just below the "cut-score," what decision should be made? According to signal detection theory, the decision-maker has an array of options for selecting the appropriate "threshold" value on the predictor. If the concern of the organization is to admit as many potentially successful candidates as possible, then a "lax" threshold score can be used, and our applicant would be admitted. This choice minimizes the likelihood that a potentially successful candidate would be rejected, but it also increases the likelihood that many eventually non-successful candidates will be admitted.

If the organization wishes to accept only those applicants who evidence a high probability of success then a "strict" threshold would be used and our candidate would not be admitted. Under these rules, however, many potentially successful applicants would never be admitted; the advantage is that the probability of admitting an eventually unsuccessful candidate would be very low. The decision-maker should choose the threshold level after determining which type of error can best be tolerated, a false-positive or a false-negative. When the first type of error is made, some eventually unsuccessful candidates are admitted; when the second type is made many potentially successful candidates are denied admission. How can signal detection theory assist in deciding threshold levels and in identifying the most tolerable error? It suggests that the cost and benefits of making these different types of errors be calculated.

When the cost of admitting an eventually unsuccessful candidate is high, whether the cost be monetary, social, or damage of some kind to the institution, then clearly the institution would want to set a very strict threshold, even if the applicant "pool" is relatively small. If the concern is to ensure that all potentially successful applicants are admitted because the cost to an individual of being denied the opportunity to be ordained is greater than any cost to the institution, then a more lax threshold would be used. The decision as to which costs are greater cannot be determined by psychometric science, but instead rests on the values and beliefs that underlie and guide the institution. All that psychometric science can provide is a well-constructed assessment program, and a method for combining the results of the assessment process into a format that can be entered into the decision matrix constructed by the institution. Effectively, tests cannot make decisions, and even the best tests cannot overcome a poorly formulated decision scheme or a vaguely defined criterion.

A second issue that Signal Detection Theory considers is the degree of accuracy or relevance of the information used as predictor variables. That concern centers more nearly around the "validity" of the predictor variables, although the reliability of the information also is of importance. As will be explained in more detail below, any instrument or test can be highly reliable (i.e., it gives consistent information when the same object is measured repeatedly) yet not be a very accurate or valid predictor. For example, height and weight can be measured with great reliability, but individual differences on these variables have virtually nothing to do with eventual success in seminary training. Predictive validity varies as a function of the quality of the predictor variables used. The task that the decision maker must engage in is to find those predictors that increase the accuracy of their decisions. Even a cursory review of the research literature that has examined the correlates of success in ministerial training finds that very few high quality predictors have been found. Most studies used tests and other forms of psychological data that were relatively easy to obtain, or that seemed to "work" in other kinds of selection or diagnostic studies, even though their specific relevance to the task at hand was not apparent.

Signal detection theory suggests that such "low accuracy" (relevant) predictors may yield predictions that are better than simple chance predictions, but the model holds that a very strict cut-score threshold would have to be used if the concern was to minimize false-positive (or costly) errors. As the quality of the predictor variables improves, the threshold value could be lowered without any increase in erroneous predictions. The methodologies of psychometrics can be used to identify those higher quality predictors and to indicate the relative contribution each of these variables can make to the prediction of performance on the criterion.

DETERMINING THE SELECTION CRITERIA

The search for relevant, meaningful, and reliable predictors of the proximate criterion, success in the seminary, has been done only partially; the research needed to address the ultimate criterion, success as a priest, is still in a very primitive state. Bear in mind, however, that the impediments to these searches reside as much in the inability to specify the indicators of success on the criteria as they do in any weaknesses in the predictors. As Dittes indicated almost 25 years ago, ". . . problems of prediction are dogged by the uncertainty and multiplicity of the criterion itself. The identification of excellence is difficult enough for a profession beset with norms on all sides . . . The difficulty is multiplied by the great variety of roles and situations in which clergymen function." (1970, p. 15) The difficulty is further compounded by the differences in the goals of the selection process: choosing candidates who manifest characteristics and qualities associated with "successful" priests versus making as certain as possible that no candidate is admitted who will eventually "fail" as a priest. These goals, while seemingly similar, are in fact very different, and the testing program used in the selection process, therefore, must all be different.

To accomplish the first goal, the decision-maker must stipulate explicitly the characteristics of successful priests in consideration of the many roles that revolve around their central priestly mission, and then to search for candidates who show evidence of eventually (after training) acquiring or actualizing those characteristics. Intuition and maybe even common sense may suggest some of these characteristics (e.g., religiosity, a sense of charity, concern for fellow man, a history of good works, and piety) but it is likely that more relevant characteristics can be identified only from rigorous analysis of the "job" requirements, coupled with an analysis of those who succeeded and those who failed to succeed on the "job." My search of the literature did not yield any studies that have accomplished this goal with any acceptable degree of accuracy.

The second manner of stipulating criteria focuses on screening out, or at least identifying early, those applicants who show some current psychological disorder, or who show signs that they are vulnerable to some specific disorder in the future. The goal here is to minimize the likelihood of admitting to holy orders someone who will eventually be unable to function as a priest because of some emotional or behavioral disorder. Advances in understanding and diagnosing psychological disorders now allow for fairly accurate differentiation of those who are "disorder-prone" from those who are not, but even the best of these diagnostic systems yield a false-positive and false-negative rate that limits their effectiveness in individual cases. A deeper philosophical, and perhaps theological, issue arises when this second manner of stipulating criteria is used. Should the church have as its goal a priesthood all of whose members are "normal" or at least symptom free when gauged against current psychiatric and social standards? As Dittes again pointed out, there ". . . is a distinction between mental health and effective ministry. Even if tests can measure and predict health and stability, this hardly provides any basis for predicting who will become a good clergyman. With the array before us of such tormented heroes of the faith as Jeremiah, Paul, Luther, alongside instances of present-day pastors happy, drably and faithlessly overadjusted to the suburban norms and institutional status quo in which they are embedded —with such considerations as this, no one dares to say that the usual criteria of mental health may be invoked in the selection of effective ministers." (1970, p. 5)

Normative values, beliefs, and modes of functioning may be inadequate standards by which to measure the psychological "make-up" of men who aspire to be priests. An individual's decision to become a priest may immediately identify that person as some one who is "deviant" when general population standards or norms are used. The findings from the earliest studies of the psychological traits and "personality" of priests (see O'Neill's chapter for a review of some of that work) suggest that some of the most popular psychodiagnostic tests (e.g., MMPI) may over-identify instances of psychopathology among priests and seminarians, not because of any disorder in the individual, but because of differences in the preferences, values, and beliefs of these men compared to some group of "men-in-general." The construction of a psychological assessment protocol that has as its goal the detection of psychologically-disordered individuals should be undertaken with the clear understanding that "atypical" does not imply "disordered;" unfortunately, most currently available psychodiagnostic tests tend not to make this distinction.

I have dwelt at length on general issues and concerns associated with prediction because they arise in all situations in which we attempt to forecast the future on the basis of present information. We all no doubt have been soaked by an unpredicted downpour, and most of us look out the window, after listening to the weather forecast, before venturing into the outdoors. Forecasting weather is substantially less difficult and complex than predicting even relatively simple human behaviors. As we proceed to a discussion of the role of psychological assessment and testing, I hope that the reader will keep these issues in mind.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

Psychological assessment refers to the process of solving problems or answering questions in which psychological tests often are used as one means of collecting relevant information. (Maloney & Ward, 1976) The process utilizes a variety of data sources beyond formal psychological tests, including interviews with the client or candidate, interviews with persons who are knowledgeable about that individual, and/or observations of the individual in a natural or contrived setting. The assessment process generally involves three basic issues: 1) defining the assessment problem so that the assessor knows clearly what problem the referral source (i.e., the vocation director) is attempting to answer; 2) determining the kinds of information that are needed to respond to the problem, and then selecting some optimal way of obtaining that information; and 3) interpreting the data and rendering a judgment or offering a recommendation that is responsive to the requests of the referral source.

Defining the Problem and Choosing the Assessor

As was discussed above, the issues involved in understanding clearly the referral question are not as straight forward as they seem. Different assessment procedures are needed to identify candidates who are likely to succeed in the training program than are needed to identify or diagnose those candidates who are likely to develop, or who already manifest signs of, some psychological disorder. A clear statement of "purpose" is needed to guide the assessment process. Of equal importance to the clarity of the referral question is the need on the part of the examiner to understand that question in the context in which it is being raised. The psychologist-examiner should have specific knowledge of the "operational criteria," not just some general knowledge of test administration and interpretation.

I am not suggesting that seminaries or dioceses select "friendly" or biased evaluators, but I am stating that the choice of the assessor is of critical importance. The evaluator should be aware of the specific nature of seminary training, of the unique requirements and demands of that training, and of the likely impediments to success in that environment. As Maloney and Ward (1976), Cronbach (1990), and Aikens (1991) have indicated, assessment is not a "value-free" activity, and the examiner must have an understanding of the values of the institution requesting the assessment. Because the assessor chooses the tests and other procedures that will be used, and then analyzes and interprets the findings, the selection of an assessor who does not have specific understanding of those values will lead in all likelihood to poor recommendations, and eventually to costly errors in selection.

Data Collection

Once the examiner has an understanding of the problem the assessment is intended to resolve, the next task is to determine what types of information are needed, and to decide what the best methods are for obtaining that information. In most instances of psychological assessment, psychological tests are the primary methods chosen to obtain information. A psychological test is a standardized measure of certain attributes of a sample of behavior, where "behavior" may be construed as virtually any activity, observed or inferred, of the person. Typically only a limited range of behaviors are sampled, and those usually are chosen because of their relevance to the assessment problem. The attributes generally assessed include intellectual ability or aptitude, motivations or needs, attitudes and beliefs, preferences and interests, and traits. The aggregation of these attributes yields some understanding of the "personality" of the individual, where personality refers to that which renders the individual unique, and which allows for some prediction as to how that individual is likely to "behave" in some future situation (Cattell, 1979).

A huge number of tests have been created by psychologists over the past 75 years, each developed with the expectation that it was tapping some important attribute. Classifying these tests into discrete attribute categories is a difficult task because one test may be used for more than one purpose. Instead, I will classify the tests by their typical usage, instead of by the attributes they measure. At the most general level of categorization for our concerns, tests may be differentiated according to their usage for appraising differences that are related to "normal" functioning and for differentiating or diagnosing abnormality, psychopathology, or mental and emotional disorders.

Measures of Normal Functioning: Tests used to assess "normal" functioning typically measure interests, attitudes, needs, and traits by means of "paper-and-pencil" questionnaires that ask the respondent to rate, rank, or indicate degree of agreement with a question or statement. For example, Cattell's Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF) a widely used personality test, asks respondents to answer questions that are intended "to see what interests you have and how you feel about things." There are no right or wrong answers on "personality" and interest tests, but the choice of alternatives influences the person's score on one of the specific attributes the test measures. The person's scores on these tests generally are given "meaning" by comparing those scores to some reference, standardization, or norms group. The selection of the appropriate reference group is a critical step in the assessment process. In highly refined selection endeavors, such as identifying appropriate candidates for admission to a seminary, general norms may not be sufficient, but instead the scores should be compared to norms based on the responses of men who have already entered seminary training.

A wide range of tests are available that assess normal functioning. Among the more recent general personality tests are the NEO Personality Inventory by Costa & McRae, which measures five broad personality characteristics that have been identified through the rigorous methods of factor analysis, and the Eysenck Personality Inventory. Interests are measured by the Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory, which is a revision of one of the first and most durable of all objective tests, the Strong Vocational Interest Blank; other widely used interest measures are the Kuder Occupational Interest Survey and The Jackson Vocational Interest Survey. Psychological needs derived from the works of Henry Murray are measured by the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule and the Personality Research Form (PRF). As will be explained below, tests that assess similar characteristics can differ in the way they are constructed, thus leading to differences in the interpretation of their findings. Awareness of these differences is critical if accurate interpretations are to be expected.

Measures of Psychopathology: Tests used to assess psychopathology generally take two forms. The first are "paper-and-pencil" questionnaires that are very similar in appearance to the tests described above. The most widely used and extensively studied diagnostic test, the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI), is an example of such a test. Other widely used diagnostic tests of this type include the Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory, the Symptom Checklist-90, the Beck Depression Inventory, and the Jackson Personality Inventory. All of these tests are classified as "objective" measures because the scores that are computed are based on standard scoring keys. Scores are computed by counting the number of "keyed" responses, a task that can be performed manually or by computer.

A popular alternative form of diagnostic testing is referred to as "projective" assessment during which a highly trained examiner presents a "stimulus" to the respondent and asks that the respondent give meaning to that stimulus. On the most widely used projective measure, the Rorschach Inkblot Test, the examinee is given a card (or "plate") on which an unstructured "inkblot" has been printed and is asked to tell what he sees. The examinee's responses to the standard ten blots are then scored by the examiner for certain attributes that are reflective of underlying personality structure. Several different scoring systems have been developed to give meaning to Rorschach responses; with each of them, however, there is considerable latitude in determining the score and the meaning of responses. The projective tests differ, therefore, from paper-and-pencil tests in the objectivity/subjectivity of scoring, a difference that has spawned considerable discussion and debate in the literature.

A second widely used projective test is the Thematic Apprehension Test (TAT) that was developed by H. Murray as a vehicle for measuring psychological needs. The TAT is comprised of a series of cards on which scenes of varying degrees of ambiguity or structure are depicted. The examinee is asked to "tell a story" about the scenes; the story is then analyzed and scored for manifest and latent needs. In contemporary usage, psychodynamic aspects of personality are inferred from the examinee's projections, a usage that is somewhat far removed from its original intent. Other widely used projective techniques include the production of drawings of animate and inanimate objects (House Tree Person) or the copying of geometric designs (Bender Visual-Motor Gestalt Test). A more structured projective technique requires the examinee to complete a sentence or paragraph in response to a stimulus sentence stem (e.g., My mother . . ., or This I believe about religion); these productions are then scored according to sophisticated guidelines to yield information about an individual's ego strength, cognitive processing and structure, or underlying personality organization.

Proponents of projective personality assessment believe that paper-and-pencil tests measure only superficial aspects of personality, and thus are of limited value in psychodiagnosis. These assertions also have led to considerable debate and controversy in the field of personality assessment, with proponents on both sides arguing vociferously for the validity of their position, often in the absence of confirming empirical data.

Projective assessment usually is much more costly and time-intensive than is objective assessment, because the examiner must be present throughout the testing session and then must devote more time to scoring responses before formulating interpretations. In light of the considerable controversy about their validity, projective techniques should be used only when there is a compelling need for them, and only when the examiner is an expert in those techniques. As Maloney and Ward (1976) noted in their discussion of psychological testing ". . . much of the difficulty with psychological testing and/or assessment is due to poorly trained or incompetent examiners. . . . psychology programs typically offer only a year (nine months) in testing, focusing almost totally on competence of test administration and scoring." (p. 6) Because projective tests usually are interpreted on the basis of the examiner's subjective norms, values, and clinical experience, the specific qualifications of the examiner are of particular importance in this phase of the assessment process.

Clinical Interviews: A complete psychological assessment generally goes beyond formal psychological testing to include an in-depth interview. The interview provides a means of opening the assessment process by allowing for a more free-flowing conversation during which information not tapped by the tests can be obtained. Unlike tests, interviews generally are unstandardized and subjective, and yield "qualitative, rather than quantitative, data." Interviews are more flexible techniques than are tests, and they have the advantage of allowing the examinee to "direct" the course of the conversation, thereby providing insights into his mode of interrelating, into the ways in which he deals with ambiguities and conflict, and into his construal of his past history and view of his world. As was the case with projective tests, the meanings given to interview findings generally are based on the subjective impressions, or clinical judgment, of the examiner. As such, these findings and interpretations tend to be less reliable that those derived from standardized tests. Several recent well-publicized cases involving accusations of sexual abuse of young children have highlighted the possibility that clinical interviews may be manipulated so that the examiner "discovers evidence," based on repressed memories of the examinee, that support those allegations. The astute examiner recognizes that interview data have value in the formation of hypotheses, just as test data do, but by themselves cannot be used as evidence to prove those hypotheses. This point leads to the next phase of the assessment process which involves combining and interpreting the findings of the data collection phase.

Forming Conclusions and Recommendations

Psychological assessment can be conceptualized as a hypothetico-deductive reasoning process. The examiner generates hypotheses based on knowledge of the problem area (the referral issue) and knowledge of the examinee, and tests these hypotheses to determine whether or not the data collected substantiate them. The process is a dynamic one in which the information collected may lead to new hypotheses and the need for additional information. Thus, the three phases that are being described occur in an interactive cycle. It is only for purposes of discussion they are presented as discrete phases.

The issue of how best to "make sense" of the findings of an assessment is the subject of considerable debate in psychology today. A widely-shared belief is that the examiner uses the data to make inferences about the personality dynamics of the examinee that are several levels of inference beyond the data at hand, and from these inferences is able to predict the probability of some future behavior. This belief in the "art" of clinical assessment has been challenged and refuted repeatedly in the professional literature, beginning with the seminal work of Paul Meehl in 1954. The debate centers around the validity of "clinical judgments" which are based on the ability of the clinician to combine, integrate, and understand "test" and interview responses and behaviors in an accurate way; that is, in a manner that leads to correct predictions of performance on the criterion. According to the findings of Faust (1990), most clinicians are not very effective prognosticators, and appear to make judgments that are only slightly more accurate than random estimations.

Proponents of an "actuarial" model for combining assessment data argue that the clinician's judgments and recommendations are simply another source of information, akin to scores on tests, that should be used as "input" variables in a statistical or actuarial decision-making system. Within this system, all of the data obtained during the testing phase, including the examiner's conclusions, are entered in a "multiple regression" equation whose product is a probabilistic estimate of performance on the criterion of interest. The actuarial model has the seeming advantage of being objective and not unduly influenced by bias in any one specific input variable. In the real world, however, most decision-makers are reluctant, and often unwilling, to base their decisions on "the numbers" rather than on some expert's conclusions that may or may not consider those numbers. Clinical judgment will continue to be the preferred method for making sense of the findings of an assessment, even though that preference itself rests on very weak foundations.

Regardless of the methods used to combine and interpret findings, virtually all psychological assessments conducted for selection or diagnosis of seminary candidates include formal psychological tests as part of the process. Some understanding of the characteristics of those tests, therefore, is needed. In the following section, a brief explanation of the essential characteristics is provided.

PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTS

Psychological measurement essentially has as its purpose the quantitative description of the extent to which individuals differ from each other in the manifestation or possession of specific traits or characteristics. The quantitative descriptions may be used to classify individuals into qualitatively different categories, as is done on the widely-used measure the Meyers-Briggs Type Inventory, or to rank or rate those individuals on a continuous scale of some underlying dimension of personality or ability, as is done on the 16PF. The guiding rationale underlying psychological testing is that individuals differ among themselves in the manifestation of certain known characteristics, and that these differences can be reliably observed.

A psychological test is a standardized, time-limited sample of behaviors that yields scores that are used for classification, diagnosis, or prediction. A score may be given meaning by comparing it to the scores of other people who have taken the test (norm-referenced scoring); by comparing a score to scores obtained by the individual on other related tests or scales, without regard to group norms (ipsative scoring); or by comparing it to some standard of performance (criterion-referenced scoring). Thus a score does not have inherent meaning, and the test user must be aware of the "meaning system" that is being used to interpret it. In general practice, it is unlikely that a test could be interpreted in each of the three systems. However, many users frequently misinterpret scores by not understanding or attending to these differences.

Norm-Referenced Test Scores

Most of the tests used in past studies of seminarians and priests yielded scores that were norm-referenced. On those tests, an individual's score is given meaning by determining how far above or below the "mean" it falls, where the mean is the arithmetic average of scores obtained by persons who comprised the standardization or norming sample. Distance from the mean is calculated in units called "deviation scores" which are based on the amount of "variability" found in the standardization sample. The important thing to stress regarding scores on normative tests is that their meaning can be expressed only in comparison to some reference group's performance on the test; there is no absolute criterion against which to gauge performance. The availability, therefore, of an appropriate reference group is a critical factor to consider when choosing a norm-referenced test. To date, no adequate norms have been developed that could be used to identify the successful from non-successful seminary applicant on most (and perhaps all) widely used personality measures.

For example, scores reported on the standard forms of the MMPI and MMPI2 were derived by comparing item responses of large samples of clinically diagnosed and non-diagnosed (often referred to as the "normal" control group) people, and then calculating statistical deviation scores for these groups and generating tables of norms based on this sample. When the MMPI is used today in practice, the scores of the person tested are compared to one or several of the reference groups to arrive at an interpretive meaning. Often however, the scores are interpreted as though they were criterion-, rather than norm-, referenced. A score above some value (e.g., a T score above 70) is taken as an indication that the person tested can be categorized into a specific diagnostic classification.

There is, however, no necessary relationship between how far above or below a group mean a score is and classification into some category. In a major critique of both the revised and original MMPI, Helmes and Reddon (1993) stated "There are advantages and disadvantages to both categorical and dimensional (in the sense used in this paper, norm-referenced) classification, but it is unusual to see both models in operation at the same time without an explicit rationale for doing so. The contrast between the categorical diagnostic model of conditions such as homosexuality and schizophrenia is at odds with the intrinsically dimensional measurements used in the MMPI scales. . . . In a practical sense, one has schizophrenia, or one does not. There is no increasing probability or a cumulation of symptoms to allow a near-schizophrenia . . . the prediction of class membership requires the use of base-rates and cutting points and the calculation of sensitivity and specificity, not T scores" (p. 457). The wide spread practice of making categorical decisions or diagnoses based on norm-referenced test scores, be those decisions based on the MMPI or any of the other widely used personality measures, continues in spite of studies such as Helmes and Reddon. Such practice contributes to the problems that beset decision makers who fail to understand or appreciate the distinctions between norm-referenced and criterion-referenced scoring.

Ipsative Test Scores

Another example of mistakes in test interpretation arises when a test constructed as an ipsative measure, such as the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS), is interpreted as though it were constructed as a norm-referenced scale. The EPPS was constructed to assess the relative strength of different psychological needs within an individual, rather than to assess the differences in needs between individuals. Ipsatively constructed tests generally are "forced choice" measures that ask the person to choose between two or more alternatives (e.g., would you rather read a book or play tennis and would you rather read a book or listen to music). By pairing all of the "activities" with one another, the relative strength of preferences can be determined without the need to compare the person's responses with those of other people. Ipsatively constructed tests are "closed" measures in that as a person's score on one need scale rises, scores on the other scales are lowered; it is not possible to obtain high scores in all areas tested. On tests constructed to be norm-referenced, such as Jackson's Personality Research Form (PRF), the person is asked to express a like or dislike for each activity independent of all other activities. Thus, on such tests it is possible for a person to score above the mean on all of the scales in the test.

It is not unusual to obtain results on these two different kinds of tests that seem contradictory, if awareness of their different forms of construction are not understood. For example, a person may have a very strong need for achievement when compared to other people because he endorsed most of the items on the Achievement scale of the PRF. Yet, the person's score on the same named scale on the EPPS may be among the lowest because when forced to choose between Achievement-related activities and other need activities, he frequently endorsed the alternatives. If need Achievement were an important attribute for success in seminary training, and if only the EPPS had been used in the screening process, then a very different decision would be made from the decision made had the PRF been used. Many of the apparent inconsistencies found on measures of personality and interest can be traced to their construction, which when understood reduces or eliminates those inconsistencies. Neither type of test is better than the other; the choice of which type to use is a function of their respective validities for their intended uses. The user and decision maker, however, must be aware of these fundamental differences in scoring systems.

Criterion-Referenced Test Scores

Problems in interpretation and decision-making also arise when criterion-referenced tests are used. The most frequent use of these tests occurs in schools and personnel selection where the assessment issues center around determination of proficiency or mastery of some specific skill. For example, an employer may require that a typist be able to type 90 words per minute in order to qualify for a job, or a teacher may require that a student be able to achieve a score of 80% in order to pass a subject-matter test. In both cases, the concern is with determining an individual's proficiency without regard to proficiencies in other areas, and without comparisons to the performance of other people on the test. Generally, criterion-referenced achievement tests are not used in assessments of fitness for seminary training, although some minimal levels of proficiency in reading and writing may be pre-requisites.

Note must be made, however, of the growing tendency to use personality tests that are basically criterion-referenced in personnel selection. A number of tests have been developed to measure "stages" of psychological, ego, cognitive, and moral development. In most instances, these tests are scored to yield a "stage-score," which effectively is an all-or-none determination of stage of functioning. Those determinations are made by comparing an individual's responses on the test to criteria that are associated with the different stages that the particular developmental model has described. Differences among individuals are based on differences in stage of functioning, not on how far above or below the mean of some norms group the scores are.

In recent years, one quasi- (some would say pseudo-) criterion referenced personality test has enjoyed wide-spread usage in personnel selection, including the selection of seminarians. The Myers-Briggs Type Inventory (MBTI) yields indications of an individual's personality type, with the types based to some extent on Jung's typology. The MBTI purportedly measures both the type category and magnitude or strength of the "pull" of the characteristics of the typology, thus combining both criterion and norm-referenced scoring. A recent report released by the National Research Council (1990) casts serious doubts on the validity of the MBTI, but the test continues to be used. As with the MMPI, popular practice often does not reflect research findings; beliefs anchored in clinical experience are not changed by empirical findings, a situation that leads to costly litigation as well as to flawed decision-making procedures.

Quite clearly, the development of an assessment battery should proceed from knowledge of the kinds of scores or data the instruments will yield. That development should proceed also from an awareness of the contributions normative, ipsative, and criterion-referenced tests can make to the selection process. Regardless, however, of the types of tests or other procedures chosen, two fundamental measurement issues must be considered, and it is to those issues that we now turn.

Reliability of the Observations and Scores

An axiom in psychometric theory states that all measurement efforts are fallible and prone to random error. The sources of these errors are many and can reside in the manner in which the test or other procedure is administered (e.g., inadvertently mis-timing a speeded test); or the error may come from a faulty selection of items thought to represent the trait being measured; or error may arise from idiosyncratic or inconsistent responding by the examinee. Every test score is an imperfect estimation of the characteristic being assessed; where there is an opportunity to re-test over several occasions, several different scores likely would be found for the same examinee.

One of the greatest contributions that psychology has made to measurement in all fields is the development of mathematical procedures for estimating the relative amount of error that is part of any measurement process. Models for estimating the *reliability* of tests and other measurement activities are used regularly during the test construction and validation process. While a full explanation of the concepts of reliability are beyond the scope of this paper, several key concepts that bear on personnel selection must be mentioned.

One of the greatest concerns about a test facing a decision-maker is the confidence he has that the behaviors or characteristics sampled by a test are accurate representatives of the general domain of behaviors or characteristics the test purports to measure. The ultimate indicator of a test's generalizability is its validity. However, before validity can be demonstrated, there must be evidence that the test is a consistent and stable measure of that domain. Two indicators of reliability can be examined to obtain that evidence: 1) the internal consistency reliability coefficient, often reported as Cronbach's coefficient alpha; and 2) the test-retest reliability coefficient. Both coefficients have an upper-bound value of 1.00, which indicates the ideal of a perfectly reliable measure. As the value of the coefficient becomes lower, the proportion of error in the test increases. The lower-bound value of a reliability coefficient is 0.00, which would represent a test whose scores are completely random.

Internal consistency coefficients indicate the degree to which the items that comprise the scale or test "hang together" as measures of the behavior or characteristic being tested. There are no clear standards that state what the lowest acceptable value of this coefficient should be in order for the test to be considered reliable. In general, however, this coefficient should be as high or higher than the test-retest coefficient. Well-constructed tests of ability and academic achievement generally report internal consistency coefficients that are .90 and higher. Well-constructed personality tests, such as the PRF and MMPI, generally have internal consistency coefficients in the range of .60 to .85. As can be seen, personality tests generally are less reliable measures than are ability tests. Many personality tests have coefficient alphas that are below .60, a condition that suggests great caution in accepting a score on any of them as a "true" indicator of the quality being assessed. Even tests with low reliability, however, can contribute to a valid selection protocol if used with full knowledge of their limitations, and if used in conjunction with other tests.

Test-retest coefficients indicate the relative amount of change in test scores over some time interval. For stable characteristics (such as intellectual ability, psychological temperament, and personality traits) these coefficients should be in the higher ranges (.80 and higher). In the personality domain, however, many of the characteristics measured are susceptible to change over time. For example, scores on a "mood" test are expected to fluctuate as the person tested undergoes different experiences. Change may also be expected if some intervention, whether intentional or not, effected the person following the initial assessment. Thus test-retest reliability is likely to be lower than the internal consistency value.

Virtually all of the major psychological tests in use today provide information regarding one or both types of reliability. The specific information that a test user should attend to is a value referred to as the *standard error of measurement*. This value is expressed as the range of score points on both sides of the obtained score in which scores on re-tests likely would be found simply as a function of the random errors that operate in the testing process. For example, on well-developed general intelligence tests, the standard error of measurement of an IQ score is approximately ±3 points. If a person obtained a score of 107 on the test, the best estimate of the person's scores on other tests administered at some other times would be in the interval of 104 to 110. We know with certainty that our obtained score is an imprecise estimate of the person's "true" ability; that imprecision is reflected in the "confidence interval" that should be used when the obtained score is reported.

Personality tests generally are less reliable than ability tests, thus their standard errors of measurement are larger. This general finding has very important implications in selection procedures that use "cut-off" scores on specific tests to inform decision-making. For example, if a T-score of 70, which is 2 standard deviation units above the mean of 50, on the MMPI Psychopathic Deviance scale is used as the cut-off for selecting candidates, and our candidate obtained a score of 73, we would likely reject that person. However, that scale on the MMPI has a reliability coefficient of approximately .75 and a standard error of measurement of ±5 points. Given that level of measurement error, we can not be very confident that the candidate's "true score" is, in fact, above our cut-off value. When the confidence interval around the observed score overlaps the cut-off score, the decision-maker cannot act with any acceptable certainty. The wide-spread practice of placing reliance on a specific criterion cut-score is fraught with risks that arise simply from unavoidable, random measurement error.

Validity of Test Use

Test validity is the most important psychometric issue in personnel selection and clinical diagnosis. Validity refers to the uses to which test data are put. Tests in and of themselves are not valid; rather a test is valid for some specific purpose. Validity must be determined empirically and in a specific situation; it cannot be inferred simply on the basis of evidence gathered in other situations. Validity cannot be assumed even for highly reliable tests. Reliability imposes a limitation on validity such that a test cannot have a higher validity coefficient than its reliability coefficient. High reliability is not an assurance, however, of high validity. Consider the instance in which one used a thermometer to measure water temperature. The instrument is highly reliable because each time it is used to measure temperature it reports the same value for water that has been kept in an unchanged environment. Upon close inspection, however, the examiner finds that the calibration marks on the thermometer are incorrectly spaced. The readings that were taken were very reliable, but they were incorrect or invalid. An axiom in psychometrics states that reliability is a necessary condition for validity, but in itself is not a sufficient condition. Highly reliable tests may not be valid ones. Most measurement text books describe three broad "kinds" of validity: 1) face or content validity, which is concerned with the appropriateness of the content or appearance of a test (e.g., a math test should have items that "look like" mathematics); 2) predictive or criterion validity, which emphasizes the degree to which scores on the test are correlated with, or predict, performance on some non-test activity (e.g., the correlation of SAT scores with college grade-point average); and 3) construct validity, which concerns the degree to which a test measure the construct, trait, or characteristic it is intended to measure. Recent psychometric theory holds that construct validity is the superordinate concept, and that the two other "kinds" of validity are subsumed under it. Content validity is now referred to as content appropriateness, and by itself cannot be offered as evidence of a test's validity. Criterion-relatedness has replaced criterion validity; it refers to both the appropriateness and degree of relationship between a test and the criterion.

These changes in the conceptualization of validity are responsive to a number of concerns in both psychometric theory and in test use in selection and diagnosis. With regard to the latter concern, a test user must be able to provide a rationale for the use of a specific test that is beyond simple evidence of a correlation between the test and a criterion. A plausible, conceptually coherent rationale must guide the choice of tests. This more stringent evidentiary basis precludes the use of tests whose correlations with the criterion cannot be explained. For example, data may be available to demonstrate a high correlation between shoe size and performance in a seminary program (such adventitious relations are not difficult to find, by the way). Unless some plausible rationale can be presented to justify the importance of the construct underlying shoe size to seminary effectiveness, the decision-maker would be ill-advised to include that data in his decision-making. Unfortunately, the validation literature is replete with instances of unexplainable correlations, including many studies in which tests such as the MMPI and other well-regarded instruments have been used.

A psychological screening or selection process, therefore, should consist of tests and other procedures that have some known and explainable relationship to the criterion. That statement brings us back to concerns about the specificity of the criterion that was discussed above. In the absence of explicit, observable criteria, the best assessment process cannot be validated. Given that some adequate criteria can be established, then an assessment protocol can be constructed from tests that have known relationship to those criteria. In all likelihood the known relationship between each test and the criterion will be low. (Validity coefficients are reported as correlation coefficients whose values lie between ±1.00.) Unlike reliability coefficients, validity coefficients rarely approach .50, and more often are below .30. Low correlations by themselves do not suggest that a test or procedure should not be used. Instead, a battery of such tests can be assembled in such a way that the combined correlation of the battery with the criterion can be maximized. The methodology of multiple regression, or multivariate, analysis can be employed to create an acceptably valid assessment protocol.

The data needed to create valid protocols probably exist in the personnel archives of most seminaries and dioceses in the US. Given the tremendous expenditure of resources in the service of rehabilitating "unsuccessful" priests and in defending against legal actions, some resources and systematic, sustained efforts should be directed toward the development of such protocols.

CONCLUSIONS

Psychological testing can provide very useful and important information to those whose task it is to select candidates for seminary education. Those tests, however, cannot provide infallible information, and cannot be used as the sole sources of information in the selection process. With no intention to criticize or to find fault, it can be said that current assessment practices very likely are unsatisfactory, in large part because of problems in identifying the important criteria of success in the seminary and in later ministries. The literature and past research are fragmented: many well-designed studies have been reported, but their findings have not been integrated with one another. A review of current practices suggests that there is a tendency to use assessment procedures whose validity is unknown, but whose clinical lore is substantial. "Expert judgment" is relied upon, even though its accuracy is debatable. Local validation studies either are not conducted or are not reported and shared. Lastly, there may be a belief among seminary and personnel directors that there exists some "silver bullet" test that will identify early on those who will later be found to be unsuccessful. That belief may even be reinforced by professionals in mental health who over-simplify the complex impellers of human behaviors and who focus on single determinants of those behaviors.

I do not want to end on a pessimistic note, but feel compelled to wave flags of caution regarding the contributions that psychological science and practice can bring to the selection process. I will not be so arrogant as to begin to suggest the specific tests or procedures that should be used in that process, but will be bold enough to state that the research needed to find those instruments must be undertaken in a systematic and urgent manner.

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7

The African American Seminarian

by Joseph Verrett, SSJ

Psychological testing and counseling relationships with African American seminarians must take into account the cultural background of the seminarian as well as changing and diverse perceptions of that culture within the African American community. The life experience of the seminarian must be respected and the counselor should examine his/her perceptions of the African American experience and how that affects the counselor/client relationship.

THE COUNSELING RELATIONSHIP

There are three elements present when two persons undertake an endeavor such as counseling or spiritual direction. There is the counselor, the counselee, and thirdly, the relationship that exists between the two. It is in the relationship that therapeutic, healing contact is made. Such a relationship does not occur by blind chance, and is much too important to be left to develop without intelligent planning.

The relationship is cemented by mutual trust and mutual understanding. The avenues of trusting communication will be open in proportion to the self-knowledge of the participants. The counselee is presumed to be striving for this knowledge through the relationship. A counselor is presumed to possess such self-knowledge, although the constant refining of this knowledge is both a spiritual and professional obligation. A trusting relationship with open communication is very likely to be one in which both parties have healthy mutual respect for one another.

In this discussion, the term "counselor" will be used to refer to the help-giver, whether he/she be an assessing psychologist, a counselor, or a spiritual director. The term "counselee" will be used to refer to the African American seminarian or seminary candidate who is being evaluated, or who is in need of counseling or spiritual direction. Although the appellation "African American" is currently the self description of choice, and is therefore politically correct, the term "Black" will be used occasionally in this discussion as an adjective, when such use seems less cumbersome and stilted.

THE REALITY OF DIFFERENCE

The long history of the efforts of African Americans to reach full personhood and equality in America has passed through distinct stages. The assimilation, or "melting pot" stage was characterized by efforts to achieve integration into the larger society. These efforts were only partially successful. The full assimilation into society that other ethnic groups have realized still eludes the African American. The overriding reason for this failure to be assimilated into American society is the fact of skin color. The African American is visible and distinguishable and will remain so in American society. He cannot "melt" into a larger pool of citizens in such a way that his presence is not remarked. The African American is, literally, a marked man.

The consequences of the failure of African Americans to be assimilated into society has led to new strategies on the part of African Americans. Having abandoned the attempt to be "just like anyone else in this society," African Americans have intensified their efforts to be equal economically while retaining certain identifying differences. This has resulted in aggressive demands that these differences be accepted by society in general.

Today we are faced, therefore, with African Americans who demand to be recognized as different in culture, life-style, preferences for worship, and even in the structure and interaction of the family constellation. These are the fundamental ways in which the African American is dealing with the fact that he is marked. While taking defensive postures to deal with the larger society which may still value the mark of color negatively, the African American is now bonding with his same race fellows to foster a sense of pride in the mark of color and to find consoling roots in a noble history, and an identifiable and well-developed culture.

A counseling relationship characterized by mutual trust and mutual understanding must be rooted in reality. The give and take nature of the relationship demands that the reality be a shared reality. Both parties must share the same perception of any critical reality that is part of the relationship. It is not sufficient for them to presume that the other party is aware of the relationship, and shares a similar appraisal and valuation of the reality.

In the present case, the overriding reality is color. Color is an issue in counseling and spiritual direction of candidates for the priesthood or religious life, especially when African Americans are a minority in the formation community. This may strike a jarring note in older directors who have been active in, or supportive of the Black effort at integration and assimilation. When African Americans were in the throes of the struggle to enter the "melting pot," the sensitive and politically correct stance of the persons who interacted with African Americans was a stance of color blindness, or color "neutrality." This is no longer the case. This should not be taken to mean that African Americans want their color emphasized in every interaction. The point made here is that it is critical that this reality be addressed appropriately in the counseling relationship.

Although I have said that the overriding reality is color, it is by no means the only real difference a counselor is likely to encounter in a relationship with a Black counselee. The issue of control is worth mentioning. The socialization of a large portion of African Americans does not include placing a premium on control. Some African Americans will be found to be very free and direct in the expression of feelings. They prize the ability to be natural and unfettered in expressing mirth, joy, sorrow, anger, and other emotions. Emotionality is freely accompanied by body language. Enthusiasm is frequently punctuated with physical contact with the person sharing the occasion and the emotion. To someone whose socialization has placed a premium on being modulated in expression of feeling, and "buttoned up," to use the vernacular, the less inhibited expressiveness of the African American can be the cause of discomfort.

A word of caution is in order here, at the risk of being repetitive. There are well controlled and even overcontrolled African Americans. There are African Americans who still want to assimilate into the larger society, and who want the fact of color deemphasized.

However, what I have called reality is no less real for not being universal to all African Americans, or for not being generalizable. The caution is simply that in counseling the individuality of the person must be paramount. The counselor must take the time to know the counselee's history and his socialization. The counselor who permits his counselee to be different and studies the counselee with gentle respect as an individual, will unearth the shared reality of which I will speak later.

One way to view the strength and health of the counseling relationship is to look at it through the concept of ego strength. For this discussion, *ego strength is the ability of the individual to perceive reality without distortions.* Distortions may arise from within the person's own system of needs, history-determined learning, patterns of acculturation, and socio-economic status. In a counseling relationship, if one party clearly sees a segment of reality as significant, and the other party ignores or denies it for any reason, then the latter party loses credibility. It is akin to the old joke about two people sitting and talking while there is an elephant in the room. One person sees it and feels the need to talk about and deal with the presence of the elephant. The other person feels it is better to pretend the elephant is not there. Clearly, the pretender forfeits claim to ego strength, and thereby forfeits credibility in a measure almost certain to cause the relationship to founder.

In a healthy relationship, two persons have to perceive and, as much as is possible, to experience a *shared* reality. When they are able to do this, and neither party distorts the reality, the relationship is between two healthy egos, and great progress can be expected.

In a counseling relationship in which an African American is the counselee, his color and heritage are a reality that is inseparable from his person. The counselor must acknowledge this reality, and attempt to vicariously share this experience of the counselee. The integrity of the counselor demands that he attempt to learn and feel what the counselee's life and experience have been. This is no different from a counselor asking "Can you describe for me what it is like?" when trying to understand an experience that he has not had, but which is clearly a significant experience for the counselee.

African Americans are not produced by a "cookie cutter" method in their own culture. They are not all equal in the degree with which they identify themselves with the Black heritage. Each counselee will bring to the relationship an individual history of learning rooted in early family experience, in school experience, peer influence, and all of the other social learning forces that shape a personality. While it is patently an error for a counselor to ignore the color and heritage of a counselee in the counseling process, it is no less an error to assume that there is one experience of being Black and African American and that each individual shares in this experience in the same way. Some individuals will see themselves as more African than American, and others will see themselves as more American than African.

Envision the scenario of a counselor beginning the relationship with a Black counselee, and saying "I don't see color, and therefore, I am going to treat you just like anyone else." Now, for the Black counselee, "anyone else" means White persons. The counselee may fairly conclude that the counselor is going to ignore his wish to have his Black heritage acknowledged as part of his individual identity. This profession of color neutrality need not be stated so baldly to have its damaging effect. The counselor may simply avoid alluding to the issue of race and color in the hope the counselee will deduce that he, the counselor, is non-biased. Either course accomplishes precisely what it attempts to avoid. The silent avoidance of the issue raises in the mind of the counselee the issue of the sensitivity of the counselor, and opens to question the awareness of the counselor to a critical reality issue in the relationship.

On the other hand, the counselor who attempts to deal with the issue of color directly, but implicitly denies its relevance to the relationship by declaring his own color neutrality, gives even more offense. This counselor says, in effect, "I know you are Black, but to me that makes no difference, and I am going to treat you just as if you were white." The offense given here can be manifold. First, there is an implicit denial of the reality of difference that many African Americans now insist must be recognized. It says that, although the counselee may value his different color highly, the counselor considers it of no significance. This effectively cuts off exploration and discussion of many issues very relevant to counseling. What will the counselor do to learn how the counselee sees himself in the larger society, how he sees his history as an African American, how he views his family origins as different, and how he sees his future role as a minister in a church which reflects the same diversity as society as a whole. It is unwise and untherapeutic, to say the least, to close off these avenues of discussion.

A second possible consequence of a counselor adopting a color-blind approach to the counseling relationship is that one of the worst fears of the counselee will be realized, namely, that he will merely be stereotyped. Many African Americans feel that they are not seen as individuals by non-African Americans. They fear and resent the fact that whites are likely to interact with them on the basis of the jokes, myths, and distorted conceptions that white persons have of African Americans. When a counselor says that he will treat the client with sublime color-blindness, the Black counselee with some justification fears that the counselor has preformed ideas of African Americans that have little chance of being examined, and disconfirmed, if needed, in his own case.

CREATING A SHARED REALITY

For the counselor who has not had much experience with the counseling of African Americans, and who may, in addition, have had little experience in close relationships with African Americans in general, the opening of the counseling relationship may well be fraught with tension. The counselor's own honesty is the key to freeing the relationship from unwanted tensions.

The counselor's first task is an exercise in self-knowledge. He must engage in self-examination prior to entering such a relationship by cataloging his own attitudes and prejudgments about African Americans. One possible, practical way to begin this task is for the counselor to list all of the African Americans with whom he has had some significant interaction. Then, next to each name, the counselor should write how he feels about that person. Next, he will try to examine why he feels the way he does about that person. After this exercise, a review of what he has written may show patterns and "transferences," that is, feelings and attitudes which have carried over from one relationship to another with little basis in reality. This examination of past experience should encompass both positive and negative encounters with African Americans.

The rigorous nature of the honesty required by this exercise might be attained with greater efficiency if the counselor seeks supervision. It is possible that a person skilled in introspection can bare his attitudes, preconceptions, biases, and distorted transferences. However, given the capacity of the human mind to defend itself from anxiety provoking blame in such a self-assessment, a dedicated counselor may well want the assistance of an objective observer-ego in this task.

Some questions for the self examination process are:

1) Do I generalize from individuals to groups?

2) Do I stereotype individuals by group membership?

3) What are my negative attitudes and preconceptions against African Americans?

4) Has my own cultural background and socialization given me attitudes of superiority to African Americans?

5) What have been my most negative associations with African Americans?

6) What have been my most positive associations with African Americans?

The counselor can benefit by studying the many available sources of Black thought. Although the young candidate for the priesthood or religious life may not yet be in the vanguard in his own thinking on these matters, it is essential that the counselor know the issues that this candidate will face as he matures and nears his goal of ministry. As a minister, he will be expected by the Black community to be sensitive to and to reflect their state of self awareness and their aspirations for crafting a distinguishable heritage. If the issue of race is not dealt with, the counselor will never be able to help the counselee form a stable and balanced sense of identity. Such an omission can be the source of painful excesses later on when the counselee may have to do emotional violence to himself to "belong" as he returns from the womb of formation to the larger world.

SETTING THE TONE OF THE RELATIONSHIP

Hopefully, the counselor will come to the initial session with the Black counselee with:

1) The realization that color will be important in the relationship, although it need not be the determinant of the entire content of the relationship, nor the focus of all exchanges in the relationship, and;

2) A knowledge of himself and his attitudes and feelings toward African Americans.

Every counselor has an interviewing style, and a preferred way to proceed. This should not be abandoned. It is important in this matter, as in most counseling situations, that the process go forward with naturalness. However, every counselor will want to obtain a history of the counselee. This ordinarily will happen early in their sessions, and offers an ideal opportunity to open the exchange to the issues of race and color.

An opening gambit for the questions to follow might well be: "*I need you to help me to understand you as an individual. We all have unique histories, and yours has been different from mine in many ways. Your personal history as a Black is of special interest to me.*"

This general probe can be followed by some other leading questions if necessary.

1) "*Tell me what it was like growing up in your family.*"

The counselor should be alert to the roles of extended family members as formative and supportive influences. Value judgments on single-parent homes are fraught with danger for the relationship. There is a trend in Black families to view single parent homes as different, or as an alternative way of family, but not as deviant. The counselor has to be sensitive to the way the counselee views his own family. What is important at this point in the relationship is not consensual agreement on traditional values, but the sharing of how the counselee sees himself in the context of his factual history. While the counselor may well quietly note that a circumstance, e.g., the absence of a male authority figure, might become significant in the formation of the counselee, little is gained by the counselor revealing his personal convictions on family structure at this point of the relationship.

2) "*How did your family members think of themselves? Did they consider themselves middle class, or upper class, or poor, or lower class?*"

Some writers about Black culture make the point that African Americans should be allowed to define their own socio-economic status. The commonly accepted divisions of socio-economic class have been devised for the larger American society, and African Americans do not necessarily identify with these class divisions. For example, a Black family is likely to consider itself middle class if:

a) Every adult member is employed and all pool their resources to acquire adequate food, clothing and shelter;

b) They do not receive public assistance. Although a member of the household may be receiving aid, this does not determine the status of the rest of the family;

c) They have high aspirations for their children;

d) They support a well-defined moral code of behavior for their members, but remain supportive of individuals who violate it;

e) They can depend on each other in times of emotional stress or financial need.[1]

3) "*How did your family members deal with being African American?*"

This question can help the counselor assess the degree to which the counselee identifies with being Black and with the goals and aspirations of the larger Black community. It can be a serious mistake of generalization to assume the same degree of group identification in every counselee.

4) "*How do you feel as a Black male in today's society?*"

5) "*Tell me what it is like for you as an African American living in this community (seminary).*"

The last question can be of great significance when the Black counselee is new to the formation community, and when he may feel isolated and doubt whether he is understood.

SUMMARY

This discussion can be summed up in a few statements.

1) African Americans today are not necessarily offended when attention is focused on the issue of racial difference. This

would not have been equally true two decades ago when the emphasis was on integration and a seamless merger of Blacks into American society. The counselor may well be color-blind, to his credit. However, the issue here is: *Is the counselee color-blind?*

2) A matter of fact honesty is the best approach to the issue of racial difference.

3) A counselor may think he knows what it is like to be Black, but the reality is that this is an individualized experience. Even an African American counselor, counseling another African American, is well advised to respect the individuality of his client, and to appropriately elicit the client's experience, rather than superimposing his own experience on the client and on the counseling process.

4) The counselor is well advised to inventory his own feelings, attitudes, and preconceptions about African Americans before undertaking the counseling task.

5) Although this may be the first time the counselee has been asked to share very personal feelings about his race with someone of another race, any initial awkwardness is not unlike that found in the beginning stages of any counseling relationship. Good interviewing techniques should be equal to dispelling the discomfort. The risk of discomfort on both sides is far preferable to having the counselee leave this session, or a later session, feeling that he is not understood, that he is being stereotyped, and made the object of generalizations by someone who does not really know him as an individual.

PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING

The comments made above on the counseling process apply equally to the interpretation of psychological tests. A thorough psychosocial history remains the most valuable of all assessment instruments, and a prerequisite for balanced interpretation of other instruments.

The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI), perhaps the most widely used instrument, is known to portray African Americans as having slightly higher degrees of pathology. The scales found to be elevated in African Americans are the F scale, 8 (Schizophrenia), and 9 (Mania). When these differences between

Blacks and Whites have been analyzed, the differences have been found to be much less significant when the groups are matched on the "moderator variables" of age, education and other demographic factors.

Although real differences exist, and there has been discussion in the literature of testing, it has not been shown conclusively that the MMPI is invalid with Black subjects. The new version known as MMPI-2, which contained a proportional sample of African Americans in the standardization population, may resolve the controversies as more data is accumulated using the new version.

The MacAndrew Alcoholism scale, one of the research scales derived from the MMPI item pool, deserves mention. Scores of African Americans must be viewed with great caution. All African Americans seem to score high on this scale, and it is therefore a poor discriminator between those prone to addiction and those not vulnerable to addictive disorder.[2]

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8

The Latino Seminarian

by Maria T. Flores

❧ This article explores some therapy issues of importance to Hispanic seminarians. While the primary focus is Hispanic culture, the issues of ethnic identity, acculturation, and personalism are common to many minority groups which seek acceptance into U.S. seminary programs. Case studies and current research document this essay into the complex world of the Hispanic seminarian in the Euro-centered culture of North American seminaries.

INTRODUCTION

Latinos, Hispanics, Mestizos! Who are these people? Who are they within the context of the seminary? This is the first question therapists, counselors, and spiritual directors need to ask when dealing with the American Hispanic. A partial response reveals itself in the following:

- There are 38 Hispanic countries represented in the United States. It is the youngest and fastest growing minority with a ten year growth rate estimated to be 58%.
- Some of these men both young and old will enter the priesthood and religious brotherhood. Hispanics have the strongest representation among those cultural minorities entering religious life (NCRVD, 1987).

- In the United States, current census figures report an Hispanic population of 22.4 million, though other studies estimate as many as 45 million continuing to grow by both birth and immigration (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990a). The census breakdown of Hispanic groups show: Mexican American, 13.5 million; Puerto Rican, 2.7 million; Cuban, 1 million; and Spanish and the other 34 Hispanic countries, 4.6 million. Seminary populations will reflect these proportions.

Probably one of the most fundamental things to remember about the seminarian is that he is in transition. He is on a personal journey. And he is focusing on his spiritual journey as he enters the seminary. But he is also a member of a migrating culture, and as such is likewise engaged in a collective journey. A person on such a journey is usually open to discovery and challenge. Yet as he journeys, he brings with him a set of core beliefs. These core beliefs about himself, his homeland, his ancestry, his family, his faith, and his world view will all be challenged on this journey. If the Hispanic man loses sight of his core beliefs he is in trouble.

In this chapter, I will use the terms Hispanic and Latino interchangeably. I will also interchange African American and Black, and Anglo and Euro-American. Hispanic is a term used by the U.S. census for the purpose of categorizing those Americans whose dominant language is Spanish or whose ancestry can be traced back to Spain or Latin America. In a similar manner, Anglo is meant to categorize those Americans whose dominant language is English or who are generally of European (non-Hispanic) background.

The generic words Hispanic and Anglo are usually not very useful to the therapist or seminarian. It is of primary importance to let the seminarian tell you who he is. Do not impose a name such as Latino or Hispanic or Mestizo on him. Avoid placing any stereotypes on him. What is meaningful is how the seminarian defines himself in light of others in his group.

The more the therapist knows about the various Hispanic cultures, the more effective will the therapist be. Unfortunately for the Hispanic seminarian, there are few seminary textbooks, classes, or seminars that adequately deal with his Hispanic reality. Consequently seminaries tend to consider all Hispanics as being the same. Though there are some similarities which Hispanics share, such as language, extended families, and special commitment to community, there are important differences among Spanish-surnamed Americans.

In Puerto Rico, the island's indigenous Indians were virtually eradicated by the Spaniards, who replaced them with African slaves (Fitzpatrick, 1981). Today's Puerto Rican culture reflects the blend of African, European, and Spanish influence. In Mexico, native Indian populations had achieved a high degree of sophistication and civilization but were exploited by the French and Spanish. Mexican culture became a blend of the Indian and the Spanish (Padilla and Ruiz, 1973).

The Cuban culture is a blending of Spanish and African cultures (Bustamante and Santa Cruz, 1955; Ortiz, 1973). Its once powerful connection with the Soviet Union further distinguished it from other Latin American cultures. As one moves south across Central and South America other European cultures as well as specific Indian tribes play more significant roles. In the United States we find many groups blending with other European cultures. An important point which is often forgotten is that most Hispanics are also very much Americans and share in the many aspects of the dominant culture's values and traditions.

The more gently the therapist approaches understanding of this unknown person the better the journey will be for both. The task before the Latino in transition is to meaningfully integrate his new experiences. In such an integration, the therapist can help the young man or the older seminarian become empowered as he experiences the demands of seminary life and of theological studies which often challenge his core belief structure. The key to integration is for the seminarian to feel and to be energetically engaged in a mutual dialogue where he is enriched but to which he is also a contributor from his own cultural religious experience.

PSYCHOTHERAPY WITH HISPANIC SEMINARIANS

There is no secret formula for psychotherapy with Latinos any more than there is a secret formula for therapy with Anglo seminarians. With Anglo seminarians, however, we know they probably were born in this country, as were their parents and grandparents, making them subject to the dominant Euro-American culture. Thus, psychological text books and articles give therapists ample background in helping them with a variety of psychological and adjustment problems. These treatment approaches are also helpful and useful in dealing with Hispanic seminarians. However, more often than not one finds something is slightly off center with these approaches for dealing with Hispanics. It is important to adjust the focus.

Treatment approaches sometimes do not address issues central to the Hispanic's experience and understanding of himself. With Latinos we know we must focus on their experience of feeling different. Hispanics not only look different from Anglos and Blacks, their cultural-social experience may have developed in them issues of self-concept and group loyalty as a defense and means to supersede a personal and social sense of inadequacy experienced by discrimination. Even though Hispanics may be confused with Italians, Jews, and Greeks, this only happens when they are away from their particular Latino group.

It is true that no matter to what culture a person belongs, we treat that person according to our perception of him. Still, when we deal with the Hispanic culture, which is a minority, this becomes a more critical issue. This perception and treatment has an impact on the person. Formation teams and formators dealing with Hispanic seminarians may have preconceived notions of what that person will be like simply by his appearance or ethnic background. Their treatment of a person may be inaccurate and stereotypical. The impact of their views may adversely affect the person and complicate the seminarian's self-image and self evaluation with regard to adequacy for ministry. This may become an important therapy issue.

It is my hope to give some general guidelines for therapist when working with the Hispanic seminarian. The three guidelines which I use as a therapist are: 1) perceptions, 2) acculturation, and 3) family and personalism.

PERCEPTIONS

Perceptions are the most difficult of the guidelines to understand. As mentioned above, the way a person is treated forms his self concept. Many Hispanics, having experienced some form of discrimination, assume that they will be underestimated or that they will not be given an opportunity to develop in a particular way. This is often confirmed in their seminary experience.

Case #1. Raul, a first year seminarian, was sent to me for therapy. The formator told me the young man was failing theology and described him as slow or possibly not very bright or maybe even retarded. When I interviewed the young man I had a very different impression. He spoke in English and Spanish and I found him fluent in both. He not only appeared to be bright but quick and insightful. Having great respect for my referral source who was a solid Spanish speaker, I could not reconcile the different perceptions between us. I therefore sent the seminarian to be tested. His I.Q. was 129. The examiner assured me that this was an accurate report and that perhaps his depressed mood was the reason he was being poorly perceived at the seminary.

Raul was depressed over what he saw to be a constant misperception of him by the students and faculty. He felt passed over and was envious of other Hispanics who could get along better or prove themselves to be equal to Anglos. But Raul was from a border town and he was experiencing culture shock as well as stress from a clerical world that was difficult for him to comprehend. When I shared with him his test scores, he sighed in relief, saying "I knew it. Now I have proof. Now someone might take me seriously. Intelligence is very important here. It is hard to achieve when people treat you like you are not smart. I was beginning to think I was terribly inadequate."

Raul's road back to health began when he recognized how he had entered a repetitive pattern of relying more on other's opinions of him than on what he knew to be true about himself. His core belief system somehow had been shattered. His own perception of himself was based on his interactions with others rather than on what he could achieve. This shattering would not have happened if he had been in his old Mexican American community where the human interactions were more important than any academic achievement. In fact, in that community, unless the interpersonal interaction were operative, the opportunity for achievement would not have been allowed. In the seminary, he perceived the reverse to be true, it appeared to him that a person achieves first and then he is accepted into community. Because his interaction with faculty was "cold," Raul did not get a clear signal that he was free to achieve. This was a most difficult shift for him. His belief system on how to live in the world had to change if he was to survive.

Case #2. Sergio, a Cuban American, was a high achiever. He was able to create community in a minute. He was reflective and prayerful. He was often given leadership roles by his fellow students and faculty. He seemed to have it all: energy, intelligence, and personality. Sergio however was distrustful of his future in the priesthood. He wanted it all and he wanted it now. He was always afraid that he would not be allowed to excel once he was a priest. He had a slight anxiety that Hispanics as a rule were passed over for positions of power.

Sergio often said yes to so many requests that he never had the time for the things he wanted. He could see this pattern would continue in his life as a priest. His good nature and talents were such that it allowed others to ask him for help. It was difficult for him to begin articulating what he wanted and believe that he might get it. Sergio's core belief was that a real "macho" man could do it all and that community came first and the individual second. Sergio came to me because his stress level was out of control. He learned to articulate what he wanted and to his surprise he got it. He was mystified how other requests lessened once he stated what he wanted.

This Cuban American considered achieving to be the one thing that proved he was a real man. He often felt that if he were not achieving all the time he was not doing honor to the Latino culture and community and that others would think him not worthy of responsibility. He carried his perceptions of his culture as a burden because community is defined differently in the Anglo culture. Struggling with the distinct definitions made a very important difference in his life. It is one thing to respond to a small family and another to a large community. His fear of being passed over is an issue he will probably struggle with for years until he achieves what he wants.

One's perception of community or family is a major concern for most Hispanics. In both Raul's and Sergio's cases, their past experience with their community shaped how they thought things worked. Both had to make a major adjustment in the Anglo seminary.

Perceptions shape and form how a seminarian will function. When a minority culture is involved, it is not unusual that the manner in which discrimination is viewed and experienced will determine adaptation and health. There are five stages of personal development towards cultural identity: 1) Conformity, 2) Dissonance, 3) Resistance and Immersion, 4) Introspection, and 5) Integrative Awareness (Atkinson, 1989). There are five interactional perceptions. The seminarian has perceptions or attitudes about 1) himself, his family, 2) other Latinos as himself, his community, 3) other Latinos in other Hispanic groups, 4) other minorities such as Blacks, Vietnamese, and 5) the dominant Euro-American groups (Adapted from Atkinson).

These stages may oversimplify a complex issue of culture because some Hispanics have a solid self concept and a strong cultural identity and do not go through these stages. These Hispanics, because of birth, socio-economic status, personality, intelligence, and experience, have not been subject to discrimination. Also, men may join the seminary already immersed in one of these stages. I will, however, use these stages as a progression because they are common to the majority of Hispanic Americans who are experiencing a dominant culture as different from their own.

When moving into a new environment as a seminarian, the Latino seminarian enters the first stage of *conformity*. In this stage he is open and conforming to the dominant group. He is self effacing of himself, his family and community as well as other minorities. He actually does feel inferior. This stage is often motivated by fear. This fear can be demonstrated by a rigid attachment to ideas. It can also be seen in an attachment to authority with a disregard for his own peers or anyone he does not see as an authority, especially women and other minorities. He is very cooperative and may be perceived as a humble person. This stage can last many years or it can be short lived. Hopefully it does not last long as he moves into dissonance with himself.

In the second stage, *dissonance*, the Hispanic experiences conflict in adjusting to the dominant culture. He often reclaims himself in an egocentric way and reclaims his culture as having something important to contribute. He develops a passion to get to know his culture. He gets in touch with the pain of discrimination and he feels a great compassion for his own people. He is disappointed with himself for having been ashamed of his own people. He begins to feel compassion for other minorities and their experiences of being dismissed. He can see the dominant culture as flawed. He becomes confused and anger begins to manifest itself. He becomes conflicted within and without. If conflicts are not resolved during this time he will most likely leave the seminary. At this stage therapy can be of great help. It can lead him through the third stage of resistance toward the dominant culture and appreciation through immersion of his own culture.

In this third stage, *resistance and immersion*, the seminarian will reject and disdain the dominant culture. This rejection is a sign of how violated he has felt and, therefore, varies in degree with each person. He experiences his core beliefs that he knows are most precious, and which are the road to his heart and mind, as threatened. This awareness creates a very angry and enraged Latino. The seminarian is not able to skip this stage of rejection simply because he believes God is calling him to love all people. At this stage, a therapist can help him direct this energy to an appreciation for and an immersion into his own culture rather than a destruction of others. If the seminarian has no outlet, this stage will be prolonged and he may show passive aggressive behaviors.

Because of his deep spiritual values the seminarian will nevertheless be concerned with this bias toward the dominant group. This concern is a key if he is to move towards a state of introspection, which is stage four.

In this fourth stage, *introspection*, the seminarian will reflect, pray, and reevaluate his concerns about his world view as he begins to gain a more balanced view of himself. In this stage he no longer has to be defensive about his cultural identity because he is committed to who he is within his cultural context. He values his culture and begins to recognize other people's disparagement as steeped in fear or ignorance. He can also recognize when he must fight for his cultural perspective and when he must simply help others see that there are many ways to be in the world. Acculturation is not a real issue, because acculturation is seen as choice or circumstantial.

The seminarian finds himself choosing friends according to his value system rather than solely on culture. He may have difficulty with other Hispanics who do not understand why he might side with the "wrong" group on a particular issue. This is a difficult stage for a Hispanic because to some Latinos he appears to be in the conformity stage. His conflict with other Hispanics, Anglos, Blacks and other minorities can be misinterpreted.

In this stage courage is developed. This is a traumatic interior state. He makes agonizing decisions about what he believes and what he must do for himself, his family and his community. He is tense and may go back and forth on ideas and issues. A therapist can help him clarify and articulate what he intensely feels and set up processes for decision making for him.

If all goes well, he moves into stage five, *integrative awareness* which is a discerning state. After agony there is peace. In discernment, the decisions come easier. The fourth stage has propelled him into motion. He can begin to appreciate himself in a deeper and more mature way. He is very open to evaluating his culture, other cultures, and the dominant culture for the distinct contributions of each. He begins to select and define himself as he integrates who he is becoming on his life's journey.

These stages are entered at various times in the seminarian's life. He can cycle through the various stages at different times again and again in his life as he integrates his cultural identity and as he changes. He can also get stuck in any of the stages for extended periods of time. This is where a therapist, counselor, spiritual director or good friend can be of great help. Often an Hispanic seminarian will simply need to go home for family advice and guidance. Time in the seminary can be a most reflective time. It can be an opportunity to process these stages for health and growth. The extent to which he processes this development can serve as an anchor in the future.

ACCULTURATION

Acculturation is a critical psychological and sociological process. But before we look at acculturation of Hispanics, it is important to first understand what is meant by culture. Longman's dictionary of contemporary English defines culture as the customs, beliefs, art, music, and all the products of human thought made by a particular group of people at a particular time. Webster's dictionary defines culture as the integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thought, speech, action, and artifacts and depends upon man's (women's) capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations.

Language has been identified as the variable that carries culture more than any other variable (Montiel, 1978) from one generation to another. Other factors such as family kinship and nationality have also been investigated and are considered significant.

Acculturation consists of many variables such as language acquisition, socio-economic class, education, family attitudes, duration of contact, and the seminarian's life experiences. Acculturation and assimilation can be a matter of birth and circumstance as well as choice. There is no right way to be acculturated and all Hispanics experience acculturation in some manner. Acculturation can be seen in relation to the five stages of cultural identity development mentioned above but not in a necessarily neat package. It can also be seen in relation to the individual's journey, his family, his community, other minorities and the dominant culture.

Acculturation is a complex phenomena which results when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, and subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups (Berry, 1980). When the Hispanic cultures come in contact with the Anglo cultures in a continuous manner eventually one or both cultures change. Acculturation in reference to the Hispanic takes place when the Latino population adopts the Anglo population's norms. This does not in itself denote assimilation in the mainstream society. The three phases of acculturation (physical or symbolic) are: contact, conflict and adaptation (Berry, 1980). These will occur in each stage of identity development. Acculturation is both a group and an individual phenomenon. The conflict creates the crisis that leads to some form of adaptation.

A Hispanic in the United States and in the seminary will have contact with Anglo culture and with other minorities, as well as with the ecclesiastical culture of the Catholic Church. The possibility of conflict or resistance is high and normal. Even though the seminarian has placed himself by choice in this situation, he will experience inner conflict. Whether he expresses this conflict will depend on his personal development. It might be a surprise to him that his belief system is challenged in areas he least expected. How a seminarian will adapt will depend of how he has learned to accommodate to the dominant culture. Accommodation does not necessarily mean acceptance.

There are three basic modes of adaptation: flight, fight or integration. Each of these forms of adaptation can be used by a person depending on the a particular situation. Flight and fight are two common responses to differences in other cultures or perceptions of discrimination until some adaptation is made.

If an Hispanic seminarian experiences people as different from himself or as dismissing him or what he values, he might just withdraw. This type of flight is the most common response in the conformity and introspection stages but it is also found in the other stages. Withdrawing can also become a personal adaptation style. Hispanics, but Mexican Americans in particular, have been called the invisible minority. Mexican Americans have been known to quietly move away from conflict, from people, situations, and neighborhoods where they sense rejection. They have been portrayed as overly sensitive.

Case #3. Juan was a good student; he maintained a B average in his theological studies. When he first came to the seminary, he participated in all the functions with excitement and enthusiasm. As time passed he hardly ever talked to the Anglos and Vietnamese in his community unless it was a formal meeting. I saw Juan in a group therapy session which was part of the formation program. He interacted appropriately. The other seminarians seemed to like him. I then saw him in a routine individual evaluation session. In this session, Juan revealed how hurt and rejected he felt by the other non-Hispanic seminarians. He was concerned because the formator had asked him why he did not bring his family to the seminary functions. He explained to me that he had to protect his family from the prejudice of the other seminarians. "How can I explain to the formator I'm embarrassed by the seminarians rude behavior?" Juan explained how he felt pain but kept it to himself. He simply disappeared. He did this in such a subtle manner that no one really noticed. Some Mexican Americans are very good at becoming invisible. He had often contemplated leaving. But he reasoned that if he could make it through theology it would not be long before he was in a Hispanic parish. In therapy Juan learned to identify which Anglos and Vietnamese were actually prejudiced and which were in honest disagreement or simply did not understand his point of view.

Another way to respond to rejection or dismissal by the dominant culture is to fight. In this mode, the seminarian reacts to others by fighting for what he believes. This mode is most often experienced in the dissonance stage and integrative awareness stage but may be experienced in the other stages. Peace protests, verbal confrontations, a visible display of anger can all be seen as fight responses.

Case #4. Roberto from Nicaragua was quite a demanding fellow. He always had a cause. He would tell the formator how to do his job. He critiqued the curriculum as racist and insisted on having a Spanish Mass daily. Roberto felt that what he cherished most about his culture was going to be dismissed so he fought. He had to accept that at times his demands could be unreasonable. He had to struggle with the idea that it was just as wrong to impose his culture on others. The formators had discussions with him on how to incorporate both worlds of the seminary life. In fact because of Roberto's constant critique and the formator's openness, a forum was developed to discuss differences in culture. This forum became a life giving experience for all the seminarians. I facilitated the first three sessions of this group forum and then one of the staff took over the facilitation. I still come in once a year to do an evaluation of the forum. Roberto is now a priest in a small Hispanic parish in Canada.

The third mode of adaptation is integration and corresponds to the integrative awareness stage. In the limited scientific literature focusing on acculturation, it is clear that Hispanics who are bilingual and bicultural have stronger ties to their culture and family and do better in self concept, academic achievement and job performance (Elizondo, 1975; Montiel, 1987; Kimball, 1968). In contrast, a longitudinal study by Ramirez shows how some Hispanics who try to assimilate to the dominant culture excessively—by reducing Hispanic identity—experience negative consequences. For example, they have poor psychological and emotional adjustment to education and their environment, and have a high probability of anti-social behavior (Ramirez, 1971).

A seminarian in this stage of integration can move back and forth between two cultures. He usually can speak Spanish and English. Language is very important among Hispanics. If an Hispanic does not know either Spanish or English well, it is very important that the seminary provide the opportunity to develop these skills. Language acquisition will enhance self-esteem. Fluency in both languages does not, however, in itself denote integration. To be bicultural is more important. What denotes this integrative stage is the ability to appreciate the value in both "his cultures" and to welcome the multi-cultural experience of the 38 Hispanic countries as well as the diverse Anglo, Asian, and African cultures. In this phase assimilation may or may not occur.

Social and personal integration occurs when the dominant culture accepts the minority person as a valuable member of the group, not in spite of ethnicity but rather by accepting cultural and ethnic differences as a value and gift to the group. This may also occur when a cultural group successfully joins the mainstream culture by establishing themselves economically in the middle class. This integration is demonstrated in a concrete way. This means the minority has the right to an education, employment, a decent home and neighborhood, health care, and is included in the decisions of the group. This does not, in itself, denote acculturation by either culture. For the seminary it means accepting the Hispanic as a person of culture who has something important to contribute to the multi-cultural Catholic Church in the United States.

FAMILY AND PERSONALISM

Hispanics have a deep awareness and commitment to their membership in their family. Family membership and belonging continues to be the most important priority for most Hispanics regardless of generation and length of time in the U.S. This sense of pride in family cuts across generational lines and socioeconomic conditions. It is found across religious preferences and geographic areas. The family also continues to be the most important resource named by Hispanics for coping with life's stresses. It is in the family where the person's self-confidence, worth, faith, security, and identity are felt and experienced. A person's identity is most often described in terms of family.

The Hispanic's nuclear family is embedded in an extended family network of relatives such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Cousins often resemble a sibling relationship. Due to parental encouragement, it is common for Hispanic children to have few peers or friends other than their siblings or cousins. Even during adulthood, emotional help, support and guidance among siblings is common. The extended family also includes life-long friends of the family as well as godparents (Padrinos and Madrinas).

Recent research with elderly Hispanics continues to point out that Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans are more closely involved with local kin groups than the general population (Sotomayor, 1991).

The Hispanic seminarian has left his family to join the clergy of the Catholic Church. While some families will react with pride at their son's vocational choice, this can also be a major problem for the Hispanic family. The family may question why their son would not want to have a family. They may show disappointment at not having grandchildren. Some families may also wonder about their son's sexual orientation. The family may cry bitter tears when the son leaves for the priesthood or brotherhood. If there are many sons, the family may be more accepting. And if their son ever changes his mind, he is usually welcomed home with open arms. The family's reaction to the decision to leave the seminary should be carefully weighed. Some families may inadvertently reinforce feelings of inadequacy.

Because Hispanic family support is usually very strong, the Latino may feel a vacuum of support in the seminary and this can add to the experience of culture shock. Excitement usually propels the seminarian through the first adjustments in the seminary. Difficulties with wanting to be accepted in the seminary as he was in his family can be an area of conflict. Wanting a close community like family may be a disappointment. Further causes of tension are the aspects of graduate theological education that often seem to dispel many childhood beliefs and cultural practices as superstitious and inferior to a more rational approach to religion. Unfortunately the importance of popular piety as a powerful source of evangelization and prophetic witness against social injustice is just beginning to be appreciated among academic theologians. It is not unusual for a Hispanic seminarian to say, "I need to go home to regain my faith in God." Or "I think I'll just go home for my break and regain my sense of self."

Therapy with seminarians should never neglect the importance of family of origin. In the long run, how a person adjusts to seminary life will depend upon these foundational interpersonal interactions. The family will continue to be an important part of his life. He will hopefully continue to keep his extended family as an important component sense of his self-identity. I remember the seminarian who told me he never spoke about his family with other seminarians because he felt they did not believe him about how much he loved being with his family.

Being part of the family brings with it the concept of personalism. Personalism is an inner quality of respect (respeto) and dignity (dignidad). This was developed through the caste system that existed in Latin American countries. Because social mobility was limited this sense of uniqueness and personal goodness was at the core of interactions between people (Ho, 1987). Thus Hispanics believe that every individual who has a sense of the inner dignity of others will be sensitive in showing them respect. When Hispanics first encounter non-Hispanics they often interpret their distance as a personal insult or disdain. In contrast, if personalism is reciprocated in a social or professional interaction, trust is developed and so is obligation.

This is an issue that comes up consistently in therapy. The seminarian needs to learn how to read the non-Hispanic in his own reality. He often has to process his hurt over what might simply be the non-Hispanics practical, efficient ways. This takes time and a shift of world view. An Hispanic may sometimes react with abruptness towards non-Hispanics because he interprets this as how the Anglo has treated him. Like many minority groups in the United States the exaggerated efforts at conformity may produce in some Hispanics a certain "hyper-Americanism." Thus he can become "colder" than the stereotypical Anglo American.

This issue can also be difficult in reverse for the Hispanic in the understanding of those Euro-Americans who come across as if they understood this personalism. An Hispanic may feel an obligation, attachment, and friendship towards this person. However this impression was never meant to be conveyed by the Anglo. But the Hispanic then expects the non-Hispanic to respond with friendship. When this does not happen, the Hispanic is left confused and distracted. Thus it becomes a therapeutic issue to help the Hispanic understand this about the sensitive Euro-American people.

Personalism can also become relevant between Hispanics. If an Hispanic becomes very efficient in disregarding personalism in his interactions, it can create major conflicts with other Hispanics. Learning to process the nuances of this particular issue will help the Hispanics in their relations with both non-Hispanics and other Hispanics. Since this issue is often unconscious it becomes important to help and encourage Hispanics to articulate these conflicts. This is one area where the Hispanic can learn to move between two very distinct cultural worlds. This therapeutic process usually dissipates the confusion and brings a great deal of peace to the Latino.

Not all Hispanic families come from functional families. If the seminarian comes from a dysfunctional family the ties may already be broken. Or the ties may be more difficult to deal with because family needs begin to constantly call on the seminarian in adverse ways. One seminarian told me he was so ashamed because he was Hispanic from a very dysfunctional family and he felt that no one believed or understood his problems. "People in the seminary have a crazy notion that all Hispanic families are loving and happy. My father drank too much. He battered by mother to control her. And he was always in conflict with one of us kids. I do not like my Dad." Hispanic dysfunctional families are just as common as dysfunctional non-Hispanic families. Dysfunction is universal.

SUMMARY

The Hispanic seminarian is a man in transition. He is a man on a journey which will change him. He will create his reality by blending with other cultures. He holds core beliefs, traditions, customs which will change. The more he can articulate who he is in terms of his own culture and language, the higher his self-esteem will be.

Psychotherapy can be a help to the seminarian on his journey as he sorts through his new experiences. It can help him claim what is important for his future and what he can discard. He can learn to facilitate his genuine belonging in the distinct worlds of culture by dealing with troubles, problems and stress when they arise.

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9

The Asian American Seminarian

by Roger Champoux, SJ

The many cultures of Asia have come to the United States. Asian American seminarians retain and manifest their cultures in different degrees and in different ways. The seminarian of Asian background has a rich heritage of family life and loyalty. While some general statements can be made, national differences are significant.

WHAT IS ASIA?

When people think of Asia, they probably have in mind such diverse countries as Japan, India, Indonesia, the Philippines. All these countries, indeed, belong to Asia. But it is important to realize the very deep differences that exist between the countries of Asia, differences rooted in their varied histories, cultures and languages. A Korean and an Indonesian, for example, have very little in common, apart from the fact that both come from Asian countries. While Korea has been influenced by China and Confucianism, Indonesia has received much from India and Hinduism. Likewise, a Vietnamese, who can be very much at home with Buddhism, has little in common with a Micronesian, whose language and lifestyle are radically different. Such examples could be multiplied. It is that variety that makes Asia so rich and fascinating, and so mysterious for us so-called Westerners.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN ASIA

There is a similar variety when one looks at the way Christianity is lived in the different countries of Asia. If we limit our attention to the Catholic Church, we may perceive a basic similarity because of the uniformity of doctrine and structure that has been brought by the Catholic missionaries since the time of the 16th century. But the Catholic faith was received very differently by the various Asian countries. While the Philippines became a predominantly Catholic country (today about 85 percent of Filipinos are Catholic), the Catholic Church has remained a very small minority in Japan (not even one percent of its population is Catholic). In other countries, like Vietnam and Korea, the church is far more numerous and influential, although it remains a minority (less than 10 percent of the population). In addition, in several Asian countries, the church was born and grew in the midst of severe persecutions. For example, there have been more than 100,000 martyrs in Vietnam.

What are the implications of these facts, very briefly mentioned here? When young men from Asia ask to become priests, it is very important to remember that their Asian origin does not automatically confer upon them a clear list of "Asian" characteristics. If John is somewhat secretive, Philip drawn to contemplation, Anthony attached to his family, it could be very misleading to attribute such traits to their Asian origin. Added to this is another important consideration: what brought this seminarian (or most often his family) to the United States? Is he a Vietnamese whose family had to flee their country at the time of the 1975 exodus? Or is he a Filipino whose parents came to the United States in search of greener pastures? Was he born in his country of origin or in the States? How deeply inculturated have his family—and he himself—become? Such factors may be very important because an Asian seminarian may still retain strong cultural characteristics, or may have become very much like the young Americans of his age.

HOW DIFFERENT ARE ASIANS?

I have until now stated the following case: there are enormous differences between various Asian countries and we cannot speak of one "Asian" culture. But are there not, on the other hand, important differences between Asian people and those from the West? I have been living and working in Asia since 1962, and my own answer to this question is: "Yes, of course," and "No, evidently."

I answer "Yes." I spent about 10 years in Vietnam between 1962 and 1975. I was fascinated by the language, the culture, the people. Everything seemed different from the world to which I had been accustomed. I learned to eat rice instead of potatoes and use chopsticks instead of a fork and spoon. I heard ancient stories of conquest that had nothing to do with the Roman Empire or the New World. I discovered the mysteries of a language that had a soul of its own and no grammatical link with my native French. And yet, I found myself in deep communion and spontaneous sympathy with all in that world which had been initially so alien. I came to realize that, in fact, I was not so different from my Vietnamese friends.

When I came to the Philippines in 1976, I underwent a severe cultural shock, perhaps more severe than my initial transition from Quebec to Saigon. I was still eating rice, but now with a spoon instead of chopsticks. I heard music that sounded sometimes like an old Spanish folksong and other times followed the latest rock rhythm. I found religious devotions that brought me back to my early Catholic upbringing. I lived under a political regime (it was then martial law under Marcos) that managed, not too well, to cover up pervasive corruption under moralistic statements and religious rituals. It was, indeed, a very different world. And yet, again, I got hold of some cultural keys and found myself attuned to the heartbeat of a new people.

Quebec, Saigon, Manila: for me, three different cities, three different worlds. And yet, in each place, people are immensely lovable and sometimes not so likable. Whatever the language, spoken and unspoken, it is possible to communicate because, in different ways, we share the same humanity, the same longings, and very similar wounds and problems. This is why I also answer "No" to the question raised above.

Since 1976, apart from living in Manila, I have been involved in counseling and therapy work with people from most countries of Asia. Although the cultural differences are fascinating, marvelous, and unfathomable, the human commonalities are even more profound and wonderful.

Let me translate this into a more psychological language with the help of one or two examples. If we look at the patterns of upbringing across Asian cultures, we find an amazing variety. Yet, in every culture, it is always the same human nurturance that comes forth. However many ways of expressing it, the child always knows whether the love is genuine or not, and the lack of love in any culture causes a wound that may take a long time to heal. I have done some crosscultural research, for example, on the problem of "loan," that is of children who are given away, for a few years or forever, to the grandparents or to childless relatives. This phenomenon seems to be encountered more frequently in Asia than in Western countries. There are even some islands of Micronesia where this is more the rule than the exception. There are always very good reasons given by the culture or the family for this "loan." Adults who have been "loaned" as children will often exhibit very good social skills and seem relatively well adjusted. Yet, a significant number of them carry within themselves a deep sense of rejection and loss, which may surface in depressive episodes later in life. Within the mind of the child, across cultures, there seems to be this reflection: "If I were precious in their eyes, my parents would never give me away."

Some cultures are more expressive than others: a Filipino for instance usually seems more spontaneous than a Chinese, and an Indian more self-assertive than a Japanese. In a counseling situation, however, whatever the cultural customs used to support one's defenses, it may be as difficult for a Filipino or an Indian as for a Chinese or a Japanese to reveal one's innermost thoughts and problems. In other words: there are many different cultural manifestations, but the basic human needs, the core conflicts between oneself and others, the clever ways of protecting one's self-image, the struggle against one's self-centeredness, are always there. The culture gives different flavors and colorings but the underlying dynamic patterns belong to our core humanness.

Here is a more technical example, in the context of psychological testing. For several years (since 1968 in fact), our consultation center in Manila has been using Filipino norms for the MMPI. We always assumed, considering the rather large discrepancy between our local norms and the original American norms, that Filipinos were indeed very different from Americans, as revealed by such a test as the MMPI. A few years ago, when the new MMPI-2 norms were published, we were surprised to find out that our 1968 Filipino norms were almost identical to the new American norms (except for the two validity scales L and K, and for the Mf scale). This confirms the poverty of the original MMPI norms but, more importantly, shows the underlying similarity of some core personality traits across two different cultures.

After contradicting myself and stating that there are both enormous differences and striking similarities across cultures, I would like to contradict myself even further and look at some common traits or patterns that could be of importance in dealing with seminarians from Asia. It is risky to generalize in this way but I rely on my own experience in dealing with people from different Asian cultures. I would like to mention a few points in relation to the Asian family and the consequences in one's relationship with authority, and then point out a few other areas that may be of some importance in relation to the priestly-vocation, like self-identity, openness, sexuality.

THE ASIAN FAMILY

Patterns of Authority in the Family.

It is in the family that cultural diversity is most manifest. It seems that, even to this day, the Asian family remains closer and stricter than families in the West. This is particularly true in countries that have been under the influence of Confucianism (like China, Korea, Vietnam for example), but also in other Asian countries. The decisive role of parents in choosing their children's spouses has diminished very much but it is not rare for a father to decide the future college course of his children. The influential role of Japanese parents in encouraging the diligence of their children in studies is often mentioned. In a Filipino family, the unmarried children live most often with their parents and remain under their authority, even when they have become professionals. When they marry, they often stay within the same compound, which allows very frequent interaction within the extended family. The respect for one's parents is sacred and in most Asian families, there is *no talking back* to them, even to present a legitimate viewpoint. The line of authority, from the parents to the children, and from the eldest to the youngest children, is clear. The eldest child, either boy or girl, assumes much delegated responsibility in taking care of the younger siblings and in supporting them financially through their studies, even at the cost of enormous personal sacrifices.

This strict structure of authority and seniority can be seen in the political systems of many Asian countries, much closer to dictatorships than to democracies. Until now, few Asian countries have had regular changes of government through democratic processes. There is more and more talk about "people power" but it is often more a wish than a reality. It is more often the army than the people themselves who bring about changes of leadership, but end up with a similar pattern of dictatorship.

This is also true of the structures in the church, which often follow the same style of authoritarian leadership. On the part of the young people, it is amazing to see how they so often remain compliant towards authority—parents, teachers, political leaders (the one striking exception would be the constant anti-government role played by the Korean youth in the past 30 years). They obey their parents, respect their teachers, go along with political authorities, do not challenge spiritual leaders. At least not openly.

A seminarian from Asia, therefore, will most often be respectful and docile, unless he has imbibed the spirit of independence of his new country. Sometimes, this is accompanied by a certain lack of autonomy and critical thinking. Yet, quite often, there is underlying resentment. If it is conscious, it will not be expressed directly to the person in authority but will be spread around the peer group. If it is unconscious, it may take the form of subtle resistance underneath the overt compliance (passive aggression). In most Asian cultures, it is impolite to contradict the other person, especially an authority figure. This comes out in the language, which agrees with the statement of the other person and can be quite confusing for a Westerner. For example, to the question, "You are not coming tomorrow, are you?" the answer will be: "Yes," which means: "I agree with you, I am not coming tomorrow." Or to the more direct invitation, "Could you come tomorrow?" the answer "Yes," without any additional statement, might very well mean "No."

In this regard, several Asian languages are much more nuanced than English or other Western languages. Not only will different words and structures reflect different levels of communication according to social status, but the intonations and subtle bodily gestures will be used to convey specific meanings. When an Asian seminarian uses English, especially if he is not too familiar with the language, he may only express a limited part of what he would like to communicate. It is up to the other person, in a way, to catch what is not said, or at least to realize that there is much left unsaid.

Thus, some distinct attitudes of Asian seminarians towards superiors resulting from the authority structure that is found in most Asian families and reflect the nuances of language. In many instances, even with families that have already lived in the United States for some time, this pattern of authority remains in place.

Sense of Obligation Towards One's Family.

There is a second area to be considered, already alluded to above: the special sense of obligation that one retains towards one's family. Since early in life, in several Asian cultures, the child is made aware that his or her primary duties are towards parents and family. Here is how it is expresssed in a Filipino family. Some years ago, we conducted research using the second card of the Thematic Apperception Test. We compared the stories written by Filipinos with those written by Westerners from different countries. Eighteen out of the 20 Filipino stories portrayed a family, while only three of the other stories did so. The common theme of the Filipino stories was twofold: first, the parents are working very hard to send their child to school; second, the daughter is very grateful to her parents, she will study hard in order to succeed and she will eventually help her parents in return for their sacrifices. This is expressed in the Filipino language as "debt of the heart," one has the obligation to repay one's parents for what they have done. This gives the child a deep sense of gratitude to the parents but it also imposes a strong obligation to repay one's debt towards the family. As a consequence, it may make it very hard for a young man to enter the seminary, especially if his family is poor and if his parents oppose his vocation. And afterwards, even as a priest, he may still feel a strong duty to help his family financially, and in other ways too. It is not easy for a

Westerner to understand the strength of this obligation and the guilt it may produce in someone who apparently abandons such a duty.

This pattern may not be as strong across different Asian cultures but it is nevertheless present in varying degrees and might go unnoticed because it seems to be opposite to what takes place in Western cultures. This sense of obligation is so natural that I have often heard the strongly negative comments made by Asians about the way older parents, in the West, are left alone or are sent to a home for the aged. Such homes for the aged are very rare in Asia because it is generally unthinkable not to take care at home of one's elderly parents or grandparents.

Because an Asian young man will more likely have a lesser sense of autonomy than his Western counterpart, his parents' attitudes towards his vocation will have a greater impact upon him. But these attitudes may vary enormously from family to family and from culture to culture. In some Asian countries, the priesthood is highly regarded and the fact that one's son enters the seminary may be a source not only of healthy Christian joy but also of social prestige, and possibly too a hope of financial help in the future. In some other cultures, especially where Catholics are a minority, the priest may be a social non-entity and the parents may do all they can to prevent their son from entering. Whatever the situation, the point here is that parental attitudes towards the vocation play a significant role in the seminarian's life. Positive attitudes and expectations may be a source of pressure, and negative attitudes may create much guilt and confusion.

CULTURE AND SELF-IDENTITY

I have often noticed, when dealing with Asians, the close link between their future and their self-identity. For all of us, we find in our own families a basic rootedness in developing a secure sense of who we are as persons. In addition to this, Asians seem to have a keener awareness than Westerners of the cultural dimension of their sense of self-identity. In a counseling situation, for example, an Asian may often refer to the cultural conditions that may explain some aspects of his or her behavior.

Perhaps because of the coexistence of such ancient and different cultures and of the many conflicts that have marked their mutual relationships as well as their contacts with the West, Asians take much pride in their cultural heritages and their respective distinctness as nations. While the Chinese boast of their 5,000 years of cultural development, the Vietnamese, on the other hand, celebrate the heroes that have liberated them from 1,000 years of Chinese rule. Thailand, for example, is very proud of the fact that it has never known foreign domination. This healthy sense of cultural pride becomes a very important aspect of one's identity.

This poses a first crucial question for a young man of Asian origin who finds himself in a different culture: what does he retain of his own culture, and what does it mean for him to be a Korean or a Filipino in the United States? Is he still fluent in his own language, does he know the history of his country, or has he become totally inculturated? Several such questions can be raised, and what makes them important is the fact that his sense of self-identity cannot be isolated from his culture: one may be very much at home with himself and his origins, but for another, his personal conflicts may be aggravated by his loss of cultural rootedness. And when this happens, he may use some aspects of his culture as defense mechanisms to avoid the challenges and pains of growth. He may, for example, justify his excessive dependency on his family by saying that this is normal in his culture; or he may quote a proverb from his culture to cover up what is in fact a deep-seated mistrust of others.

This may create difficulties for those responsible for formation. On the one hand, they should do all they can to understand the seminarian with his cultural tradition and respect all that is true and genuine in it. On the other they should be able to discern when culture is used defensively to avoid self-confrontation. This is all the more delicate because of the pride Asians take, and rightly so, in the uniqueness and richness of their culture. In some cases, however, this healthy pride may become excessive sensitivity and defensiveness. It seems to me that, when the young man has a healthy sense of self-identity, he is both proud of his cultural background and at the same time open to some of its possible limitations. He will therefore be able not only to question himself but also to perceive both the positive and the negative aspects of his culture.

PERSONAL OPENNESS AND "FACE"

To the eyes of a Westerner, Asians may look closed or secretive. It is risky to generalize but it seems true that Asians are not as expressive as Westerners. This is something I have often observed myself in different forms of group interaction. Asians often seem more hesitant to voice their opinions, especially if these are in disagreement with the views of others. There is, however, something misleading in this impression: when they find themselves with their own countrymen, or with their friends, they may be very communicative and voluble. An apparent secretiveness, therefore, may be due to one's lack of facility in a different language or to the presence of domineering people in the group.

It has often been said that it is important for Asians "to save face." A counselee, who wanted to explain his reluctance to voice his feelings, once quoted to me a Chinese proverb, "The feelings you express are like water spilled on the floor" (meaning, you cannot put them back into the jar!). Here, however, I would be very wary of stereotyping. Self-revelation is not easy in any culture, especially when it deals with deep personal issues. In my own experience, the differences in openness that I have found in my clients have been individual, not cultural. I have not yet met any cultural group for which self-expression would be particularly easy or difficult. Much depends on the atmosphere of respect and understanding that permeates the counseling situation. Nobody likes "to lose face" by being misunderstood or not taken seriously, whether in the West or in Asia.

There may be, however, some truth in the statement I heard from an old French missionary when I first came to Asia: "It takes more time here in Asia (he was referring to his experience in China and Vietnam) to gain the trust of a person, but once you have someone's trust, it is for life." To me, this initial difficulty is understandable when people of different cultures some together. But after a while, cultural differences are not an obstacle to deep communication, trust and friendship.

SEXUALITY

There might be an area, however, where openness might not be as easy for Asians as for Westerners. Sexuality is a topic that is not so easily talked about. This may be due to the fact that the so-called sexual revolution of the West has not yet penetrated most countries of Asia. The majority of Asian cultures have rules of modesty that are still quite strict when compared to the customs of the West. Young people will not hold hands in public, for example, and dating may not be allowed. I have heard from many Asian counselees that sex was never talked about at home and that they learned the "facts of life" from friends or school. Usually, gender-related attitudes and roles have remained clearly defined and the home upbringing still follows traditional patterns.

But if there is a cultural area that is changing extremely fast, it is this one, mainly through the influence of mass-media. Sexual questions are discussed more and more openly and traditional gender roles, especially with regards to the restrictions imposed upon women, are being questioned. Attitudes towards homosexuality are also changing, but more slowly.

I would not risk any general statement about the way an Asian seminarian might approach the question of sexuality since there are too many cultural and individual differences involved. Based on my own experience with young (and less young) Asians, what I can say is that, despite a possible initial difficulty in bringing up this topic, they are very grateful to be able to speak about their personal questions and worries in an open and matter-of-fact atmosphere.

PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING OF ASIAN SEMINARIANS

Since the question of psychological assessment is an important aspect of this book, I would like to add a word about it since I have done a good amount of vocational work in the Asian context. While the idea of vocational assessment is generally well accepted in the Philippines, it is unheard of in several Asian countries, either because psychology is seen as too Western, or too secular, or simply because there are no clinical psychologists to do the work.

The main objection is about the doubtful validity of psychological tests because of their Western origin and orientation. This is a rather simplistic opinion, most often given by people who have little understanding of the nature of psychological tests. As far as I know, there are very few valid tests made in Asia for Asians, so for better or for worse, we have to import psychological tools from abroad. Apart from the need to translate such tests into the local language (a task which is often very difficult considering the different structure of Asian languages), it is also essential to establish norms based on the local population and to verify the way the test statements are understood. Certain statements intended to tap psychotic processes, for example, may be endorsed by perfectly normal people; or certain attitudes seen in the West as highly undesirable may be a normal way of life in some parts of Asia.

This being said, I must say that I have found several psychological tests, whether objective or projective, very reliable and useful in both vocational screening and counseling. Stories written on the basis of such Western pictures as those used in the TAT can be as revealing for a Vietnamese or Filipino as for an American. I have used the MMPI in different Asian languages and have found the information it yields very accurate. I have also given the Rorschach to people from different Asian countries and have been repeatedly amazed by its power. Evidently, each protocol has to be interpreted with the cultural background of the testee in mind, but again and again, I have been struck by the way, across cultures, our "common humanity" manifests itself through psychological processes that are so similar.

IN CONCLUSION

There is no conclusion to these few reflections because the issues discussed are, like the cultural universe where they come from, too complex and open-ended. I have taken the risk of making some generalizations about Asia, but in the end, I again warn the reader against such general statements because Asia is so diverse. And if, on the one hand, I stress the uniqueness of each Asian culture, on the other I also want to point out the underlying human commonalities.

Perhaps my last word will be an invitation. I have always found very useful the trips I have made to different Asian countries for talks or sessions: such trips have allowed me to situate my Asian friends and counselees in their "natural habitat," as it were. They have helped me give cultural coloring and emotional weight to the words they speak to me. I think that it would be a very wise investment of time and money, for a spiritual director or rector who deals with seminarians from Asia, to cross the Pacific and visit their countries of origin. Even only a few days in the Philippines or in Vietnam would give more insights into the Asian *psyche* than many long pages.

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10

Canon Law and Psychological Testing for Admission to a Seminary

by Sr. Sharon Euart, RSM

❧ Although the Code of Canon Law addresses the right of privacy in a minimal way, the jurisprudence regarding the rights of persons raises questions with regard to the protection of basic human rights. The formulation and application of seminary, diocesan and religious institutions' policies regarding admissions and counseling must take these rights into consideration.

INTRODUCTION

To direct the process of revising the Code of Canon Law, the synod of bishops approved 10 principles that were submitted to it for examination by Pope Paul VI in 1967. The first principle stated that the revised law should define and protect the rights and obligations of each person towards others and towards ecclesiastical society. Principle six spoke of the fundamental equality of all members of the Christian faithful and urged that "the rights of persons be appropriately defined and safeguarded." The seventh principle called for a suitable procedure to be developed that would envision the protection of subjective rights in the church.[1] Thus, several of the guiding principles concerned respect for and protection of the rights of individuals. It was the task of the Commission for the Revision of the Code to see that these principles were faithfully followed in drafting new or revised canons. Later, in promulgating the revised law, Pope John Paul II reiterated concern for the rights of all within the church when he identified defining and safeguarding the rights of individuals as one of the purposes of the revised Code of Canon Law.[2]

The revised code contains various listings of obligations and rights including those pertaining to all the Christian faithful (cc. 208-223), the lay Christian faithful (cc. 224-231), clergy (cc. 273-289), and religious (cc. 662-672). The articulation of the rights and duties of all the Christian faithful, organized around themes such as the basic equality of all Christians, hierarchical differentiation in the church, sanctification, mission of the church, personal rights and social relationships,[3] constitutes part of the "newness" of the revised code and reflects the teaching of the Second Vatican Council.[4] In identifying fundamental rights and obligations, the code recognizes two rights that arise from natural law, privacy and reputation. Such rights, while codified in the revised law, preexist the law since they are rooted in the dignity and freedom of the human person. It is in this context of the protection of rights, and in particular the right to privacy and reputation that we look at some canonical issues raised in regard to psychological testing of applicants as part of seminary admissions procedures.

The individual's right to privacy, that is, what an individual has a right to keep to him or herself, has received increased attention in recent years. In addition, awareness of the right to confidentiality, that is, what an individual reveals to another about himself or herself and which he or she has a right to keep that person from disclosing to others has increased as well. Both rights might be considered aspects of the right to a good reputation with different and distinct foci, and each has relevance to the screening process for candidates for the priesthood and religious life. In the Decree on the Training of Priests[5] and in the Instruction on the Renewal of Religious Life,[6] two documents issued during and immediately following the Second Vatican Council, the church recognizes the need for and use of objective criteria in the area of psychological testing for determining the fitness of candidates. How such criteria are applied, by whom they are applied, how the test results are used, and who has access to them are some of the issues relevant to a candidate's rights to privacy and confidentiality.[7]

CANONICAL PRINCIPLES

The key canon is canon 220 which states:

> No one is permitted to damage unlawfully the good reputation which another person enjoys nor to violate the right of another to protect his or her privacy.

Canon 220, based on article 26 of the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, issued by the Second Vatican Council, is found in Book II of the Code of Canon Law in the section entitled, "Obligations and Rights of all the Christian Faithful." The canon acknowledges two fundamental human rights which should be accorded all people on the basis of their human dignity, namely, the right to a good reputation and the right to privacy. During the process of revising the code, the right to privacy was initially applied only to privacy of correspondence.[8] Later the reference to privacy was broadened to include "other things of a personal nature."[9] The final version of canon 220 affirms both the right to a good reputation and the right to privacy.

Outside of canon 220, there is only minimal reference in the revised law to the right to privacy. Canon 642, in prescribing qualifications for admission to a novitiate in a religious institute, permits consultation with experts for verification of such qualifications, if necessary, subject to the right to privacy.[10] Canon 241§1, on the other hand, makes no explicit reference to the right to privacy in prescribing similar requirements for admission to major seminaries.[11]

The legislative history of canon 241§1 indicates, however, that a clause respecting the right to privacy corresponding to that in the canon on the admission of novices was proposed for the canon on admission to seminaries but not accepted at the Plenary Session of the Code Commission in October 1981. The reason for non-acceptance, however, does not appear to have been the supposed irrelevance of the right to privacy in seminary admissions procedures; rather, it was considered more appropriate to include the privacy norm among the rights of all the Christian faithful thereby giving it broader application.[12] It would seem, therefore, that, while not expressly stated in canon 241§1, the basic right to privacy is also applicable to procedures for admission to major seminaries.

At the same time, the right to protect one's privacy is not absolute. It can be limited by concern for the common good of the church and the rights of others (c. 223). Seminaries are challenged to achieve a proper balance between honoring the exercise of an individual's right to privacy and safeguarding the rights of the church to provide proper service for the People of God.

While the Code of Canon Law acknowledges the individual's right to privacy, it also acknowledges the right of the seminary to sufficient information to judge the suitability of applicants "to dedicate themselves permanently to the sacred ministries" (c. 241§1). The seminary should determine the nature and type of information necessary to make an informed decision. It is in the process of obtaining such information that the seminary's right to information may conflict with an applicant's right to privacy. In striving to resolve such a conflict of rights, a society truly committed to justice will strive to honor, to the full extent possible, each right in conflict. If procedures for admission are carefully formulated and applied, the applicant's right to privacy will be safeguarded in the process and the seminary's right to information sufficient to make a judgment as to the applicant's suitability will be safeguarded as well.

If there is information about an applicant that cannot be obtained except by violating or seeming to violate an applicant's right to privacy, the seminary should forego seeking such information. In such a case, however, the seminary should not place itself at a disadvantage by accepting the applicant for candidacy on evidence that is inconclusive as to his suitability.

While the code does not explicitly acknowledge a right to confidentiality, such a right might be viewed as a means of protecting one's reputation or good name, a human right recognized in canon 220. The unauthorized disclosure of information about an individual by one to whom such information has been revealed, or the misuse of such information, might result in damage to the good reputation of that individual. As in the case of the right to privacy, seminary admissions procedures should be carefully reviewed to assure that the balance called for above is also reflected in the area of confidentiality.

APPLICATION

The emerging consciousness of the rights of privacy and confidentiality, both on the part of church authorities and on the part of seminary candidates, has raised questions with respect to the protection of basic human rights in the formulation and application of seminary admissions policies. One area in the seminary admissions process where the rights to privacy and confidentiality come into conflict with other rights involves procedures for verifying the physical and psychological health of potential candidates.

Over the past 25 years, medical examinations and psychological assessments have become an integral, if not mandatory, part of the screening process for admission to seminaries and religious institutes.[13] Physical and psychological health are listed as qualities that a candidate to the diaconate and the priesthood should exhibit in canons 241§1, 1029 and 1051§1.[14] A candidate might reasonably expect, therefore, that voluntary submission to testing to judge his suitability for the priesthood, while an intrusion into his privacy to some degree, would be a normal component of the assessment procedure for admission to a seminary. On the other hand, if the type or methodology of psychological testing involves revelation of the intimate and interior self-concept of the candidate to a degree that the candidate is unwilling to disclose, the testing procedures would seem to be an unwarranted violation of the candidate's privacy. While the right to one's privacy is not absolute, and at times may yield to the right of the church to assess suitability for holy orders, the applicant has the right to know in advance the extent to which his interior life will be probed and the matters he will be asked to disclose.

Moreover, he has the right to assess the guarantees for protecting his right to confidentiality that are set forth by the seminary. The rights to privacy and confidentiality demand that certain parameters be established prior to administering psychological tests. While the law establishes the right of the diocesan bishop (or major superior) to gather data and information on the physical and psychological health of candidates, the methods of acquisition and the use of such information must be pursued with due regard for the rights recognized in canon 220.[15] Consequently, the procedures for obtaining psychological information have become as important as the information obtained.

With regard to protecting the candidate's good reputation and acknowledging his right to confidentiality, it is important that seminaries obtain from the applicants the proper releases for disclosure prior to initiating any testing procedures. Such releases should be granted with the explicit, informed and free consent of the individual and should ensure the applicant that the information will be kept strictly confidential. The release should also indicate that the candidate is knowledgeable about the types of assessments to be administered, the purpose of the assessments, who will have access to the reports, the use that will be made of the results, and what happens to the reports after their initial use.[16] Such information can assist the candidate [illegible] assessing the extent to which confidentiality can be ensured.[17] At the same time, instruction on how to interpret the report, the uses to be made of the information, as well as the limitations of the assessment should be communicated to all who will have access to the information.

Problems arise, not so much on the level of taking the tests, but rather on the level of access to the results of the tests.[18] Only the person(s) responsible for the acceptance or rejection of the candidate should be allowed access to the test results. Dissemination of the information beyond these individuals could threaten the candidate's right to confidentiality and constitute a violation of professional standards. In recent years, seminaries, as well as religious institutes, while coming to depend more and more on the psychological testing process for its contribution to the determination of suitability for orders or for religious life, sometimes do so with inadequate knowledge regarding accurate interpretation of the test results. The more people who have access to the test results, the greater the likelihood that some will inaccurately interpret the information and consequently misuse the test results. It is important that parameters of privacy and confidentiality be carefully explored and set forth in seminary admissions policies.[19] How much information is sought and to whom it is communicated are policy questions that, if not answered properly, can adversely affect the exercise of one's rights to privacy and confidentiality.

If it is the policy of the seminary to administer psychological tests to candidates prior to acceptance for admission, such assessments should be completed by experts knowledgeable of the church's expectations of candidates for the priesthood, familiar with the emotional and psychological demands of the priesthood,[20] and committed to using only methods of testing that do not violate the applicant's right to privacy or in any other way harm the reputation of the seminary.

CONCLUSION

The application to seminary admissions procedures of canonical principles affirming the right to privacy and a good reputation is a new dimension of the law. Jurisprudence in the area is still developing and implications continue to be explored in the practical realm. Psychological testing of seminary applicants poses challenges to an individual's right to privacy and to his good reputation as well as to the seminary's right to information. Careful attention to the methods, purpose and use of such assessments will help to ensure protection of these fundamental rights and respect for all persons involved.

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NOTES

1. *Communicationes* 1(1969) 79–83.
2. Pope John Paul II, apostolic constitution, *Sacrae disciplinae leges*, January 25, 1983: *AAS* 75:2 (1983) xv.

3. See J. Provost, "The Christian Faithful: Canons 204–329," in *The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary*, ed. Coriden at al. (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985) p. 136.
4. *Sacrae disciplinae leges*, xii.
5. Decree on the Training of Priests, *Optatam totius*, 28 October 1965 (*AAS* 58 [1966] 713–727) no. 6.
6. Instruction on Renewal of Religious Life, *Renovationis causam*, 6 January 1969 (*AAS* 61 [1969] 103–120) no. 11.
7. The matter is complicated further by civil laws which differ from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. The canonical ramifications of privacy and confidentiality in this area must of necessity be complemented by reference to applicable civil law legislation.
8. *Communicationes* 17 (1985) 187–190.
9. *Communicationes* 18 (1986) 373.
10. Canon 642: Superiors are to be vigilant about admitting only those who, besides the required age, have health, suitable character and sufficient qualities of maturity to embrace the particular life of the institute; this health, character, and maturity are to be attested to, if necessary by using experts, with due regard for the prescription of canon 220.
11. Canon 241§1: The diocesan bishop is to admit to the major seminary only those who are judged capable of dedicating themselves permanently to the sacred ministries in light of their human, moral, spiritual and intellectual characteristics, their physical and psychological health and their proper motivation.
12. See R. Castillo Lara, "Some General Reflections on the Rights and Duties of the Christian Faithful," *Studia Canonica* 20 (1986) 21, n. 40. See also Pontificium Consilium de Legum Textibus Interpretandis, Acta et Documenta Pontificiae Commissionis Codici Iuris Canonici Recognoscendo, *Congregatio Plenaria: Diebus 20–29 Octobris 1981 Habita* (Rome: Typis Polyglotis Vaticanis, 1991) p. 357 for a discussion of the reference to the right to privacy in canon 642 and its omission in canon 241§1.
13. One question about medical examinations frequently raised today concerns the requirement of HIV testing for applicants to seminaries. While an important and relevant issue, the pros and cons of such testing is beyond the scope of this article which is limited in focus to psychological testing. For three opinions on HIV testing and seminary admissions from a canonical perspective, see *Roman Replies and CLSA Advisory Opinions 1991*, (Washington, DC: CLSA, 1991) pp. 72–77 and *Roman Replies and CLSA Advisory Opinions 1992*, (Washington, DC: CLSA, 1992) pp. 54–56.
14. In comparable canons of the 1917 code, there was no mention of physical or psychological health. See 1917 code, cc. 1363§1, 971§1.
15. It is important to note that canons 241.1 and 642 place the responsibility for establishing the physical and psychological health of potential candidates upon the diocesan bishop or religious superior. While the seminary usually sets criteria for acceptance and facilitates the screening process, the focus of re-

sponsibility remains with the bishop or superior. In some cases this distinction must be clear. For example, if a diocese or religious community opts for HIV screening, civil law on disabilities makes it problematic for seminaries to establish such a requirement, since they are "public" institutions involved with state licensure, accrediting agencies and qualification for federally guaranteed student loans.

16. J. Hite, "Admissions of Candidates and Formation of Members," in *A Handbook on Canons 573-746*, eds. Hite, et al (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1985) p. 119. See also A. Anastasi, "Psychological testing and Privacy," in W.C. Bier, *Privacy: A Vanishing Value?* (N.Y.: Fordham University Press, 1980) p. 51, and J.C. Ford, *Religious Superiors, Subjects and Psychiatrists* (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1963) p. 45.
17. R. Calvo, *Roman Replies and CLSA Advisory Opinions 1991*, p. 74.
18. F. Morrisey, "Issue of Confidentiality in religious Life," *Bulletin on Issues of Religious Law* 4:1 (April, 1988) p. 5.
19. K. McKenna, "The Right of Confidentiality and the Clergy," *The Priest* (November, 1991) p. 38.
20. *The Program of Priestly Formation*, 4th ed., NCCB, 1993, n. 518.

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Legal Considerations: Civil Law and Confidentiality Issues

by John A. Liekweg and Phillip Harris

I. THE SEMINARY IN THE CIVIL ARENA

In 1976, the Lexington Theological Seminary found itself in civil court. The seminary had been sued by a student who was denied a degree because of his homosexual lifestyle. The case was tried in state court in Kentucky and the trial judge concluded that the seminary was contractually required to award the plaintiff a Master of Divinity degree. In the judge's opinion, the seminary's catalog constituted a contract between the school and its students and the plaintiff had fulfilled the catalog's academic requirements. Lexington Theological Seminary appealed.

In attempting to get the trial court's order reversed, the seminary made three arguments: (1) that ordering a seminary to award a degree violated the right of religious liberty under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution; (2) that there was no contract or breach of contract between the seminary and the plaintiff; and (3) that the plaintiff's having kept his homosexuality hidden from the seminary barred his request for relief from the courts. The appeal was decided by the Kentucky Court of Appeals in May of 1979. In its decision,[1] the court noted that the primary purpose of the seminary was training ministers for the Disciples of Christ and other Christian denominations. The court also acknowledged that students, including plaintiff, attended the seminary for the purpose of entering the ministry. Nevertheless, the court declined to address the seminary's First Amendment arguments; instead, the appellate court applied the civil law of contracts to the relationship between the seminary and the seminarian.

In order to ascertain the terms of the contract between the seminary and the plaintiff, the court looked to the school's catalog and other publications in existence at the time of enrollment. There the court found that the student's fundamental moral character and fitness for Christian ministry were to be evaluated by the faculty and the board of trustees as a condition of graduation. The determination of whether a degree candidate possessed the necessary personality and characteristics for effective ministry was thus left to the sound discretion of the seminary. Since Lexington Theological exercised this discretion in accordance with the school's own publications and did not proceed arbitrarily or capriciously, there was no breach of contract by the seminary. The trial court's order requiring the plaintiff to be given his degree was therefore overruled by the Court of Appeals.

In 1989, the Court of Appeal in Louisiana faced a situation similar to the case decided by the Kentucky court ten years earlier. Since the underlying facts differed in some significant respects, however, the outcome was contrary to that in the earlier case. In the Louisiana case, the defendant was the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, an institution belonging to the Southern Baptist Convention. The plaintiff, a minister already licensed by another Baptist church, was pursuing a Master of Divinity degree in family counseling when he was expelled for violating the seminary's regulations against separation and divorce. He sued to stop his dismissal from the seminary.

The case became quite complicated procedurally but three actions by the seminary turned out to be critical to the ultimate outcome. First, the seminary relied almost exclusively on the argument that the First Amendment prevented the courts from interfering in the relationship between a seminary and a student. Second, the seminary did not follow the due process requirements in its handbook, saying they had been adopted solely to maintain accreditation. Third, the seminary consented to a court order allowing the plaintiff to remain in school but then refused to grant him a degree.

The seminary's constitutional argument was that, as a church, it was immune from civil intrusion into its training of ministers. The Louisiana Court of Appeal generally agreed with the constitutional principle but ruled that the seminary was also a school and, since the plaintiff was already a licensed minister, his status at the school was that of a mere student. The relationship between a private school and its students is contractual, the court said, and the student handbook spelled out some of the terms of that contract. Since the seminary voluntarily chose to seek secular accreditation, it could not complain about being held to the due process requirements in its handbook. In addition, the court said that enforcement of the due process procedures for disciplinary hearings and appeals does not entangle the court in any ecclesiastical issues nor does it involve review of church doctrine concerning separation and divorce. Therefore, the court ruled that the First Amendment was not implicated and that the civil law of contracts applied. The court concluded that the seminary had not only breached its contract with the plaintiff, but by refusing to award plaintiff a degree after allowing him to finish school, the seminary had acted arbitrarily and capriciously. New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary was ordered to confer a Master of Divinity degree on the plaintiff.[2]

Taken together, then, the above cases from Kentucky and Louisiana illustrate several important factors affecting seminaries as they relate to seminarians in the arena of civil law.

A. Civil Law Relationship of Seminaries and Their Students

The first principle, which should be obvious from the above discussion, is that the civil law usually treats the relationship between seminaries and seminarians as contractual. This is not to say that there are not canonical, ecclesial, spiritual, and other aspects to the relationship; clearly there are. Nor does this mean that the civil courts will always agree to enforce the civil contract; for constitutional, statutory, procedural, and other reasons, courts will sometimes decline to get involved in the seminary's relation with its students. It does mean, however, that the seminary must be cognizant of the fact that its bulletin, catalog, handbook, and similar publications may be considered contractually binding on both the institution and the students. Requirements imposed by accrediting organizations may also be found to limit the school's options in dealing with its students.[3] Certainly if the school fails to follow its own regulations and procedures, it may be confronted with an intervention in its affairs by the heavy hand of the civil law.

B. Constitutional Issues

In the cases discussed above, the two seminaries' first line of defense against intervention by the civil authorities was the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. In both cases, the courts slid right past the constitutional arguments and decided the cases on other issues. This scenario is typical both of seminaries and of civil courts. A school's first reaction to governmental efforts to intervene in its affairs is to claim that religious freedom is being infringed. A court's first response to such constitutional arguments is to avoid deciding them, if possible, and focus instead on general civil law concepts. While this judicial reality suggests that a better strategy for seminaries might often mean making religious liberty their last stand, it does not minimize the importance of defending their constitutional rights.

> Clearly, the Seminary is an integral part of a church, essential to the paramount function of training ministers who will continue the faith. It is not intended to foster social or secular programs that may entertain the faithful or evangelize the unbelieving. Its purpose is to indoctrinate those who already believe, who have received a divine call, and who have expressed an intent to enter full-time ministry. The local congregation that regularly meets in a house of worship is not the only entity covered by our use of the word "church."
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> Since the seminary is principally supported and wholly controlled by the [particular denomination] for the avowed purpose of training ministers . . . , it too is entitled to the status of "church."[4]

As church, seminaries can lay special claim to those first 16 words from the Bill of Rights: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof . . ." As applied by the courts, this portion of the First Amendment, known as the Religion Clauses, generally prohibits civil authorities from interfering in the internal administration, doctrine, polity, and decision-making of churches.[5] In particular, secular courts cannot override ecclesiastical decisions concerning the selection, preparation and ordination of candidates for the ministry.[6] Because the "relationship between an organized church and its ministers is it lifeblood," there is a strong presumption that the determination of a ministerial candidate's suitability is beyond the power of civil authorities to review, control or penalize.[7]

Of course, just as any church may sometimes engage in purely secular transactions, not all activities engaged in by a seminary qualify as religious or ecclesiastical. In addition, as the Louisiana case discussed above illustrates, some students may not be candidates for ordination, making their relationship to the school less likely to raise constitutional concerns.[8] Nevertheless, the very purpose for the existence of a seminary is the training and preparation of ministers. While this seems obvious to those within the church, it is again important that a seminary's formative documents and general publications, such as its charter, bylaws, catalog and handbook, proclaim the school's ecclesiastical mission. It is to those documents and publications that civil authorities will look in order to determine objectively the extent to which the school can lay claim to the title "church."[9]

C. Consideration of Statutory Laws

The contractual relationship between a seminary and its students can also be affected by statutory laws in effect where the seminary is located. For example, federal civil rights laws, state priest/penitent privilege statutes, and local human rights regulations all have the potential to affect the seminary and the seminarian. These and other types of statutes that could alter the ways the seminary deals with its students will be addressed more specifically below. At the outset, however, it is also necessary to consider the possibility that the seminary may be subject to some statutory mandate or prohibition as to particular issues that may arise.

In the mid-1970's, the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission sought to enforce the reporting requirements of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 against a seminary owned and operated by the Southern Baptist Convention. The required report, known as an EEO-6, sought demographic data about the seminary's employees, including the faculty and administration. According to the seminary, the report intruded into the relationship between a church and its ministers. Therefore, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary refused to file, claiming the protection of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. When the case reached the federal circuit court, the court concluded that the seminary was a church, the faculty were ministers, and that Title VII could not be applied to that relationship.[10] However, "[s]ince the seminary does not hold any religious tenet that requires discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, or national origin, the application of Title VII reporting requirements to it does not directly burden the exercise of any sincerely held religious belief."[11] Therefore, the application of the federal civil rights statute to the seminary's non-ministerial personnel, such as support and maintenance staff, was found constitutional.

The above-quoted passage from the *Southwestern Baptist* case suggests that if the church, and therefore the seminary, did hold to a religious doctrine requiring discrimination, then application of the federal law to even non-ministerial personnel would have been an unconstitutional burden on the seminary's free exercise of religion. As a small independent Christian college discovered a few years later, however, other factors can eliminate a school's ability even to raise a First Amendment defense against the application of statutory law. The college in question, Grove City College, discovered that the acceptance, even indirectly, of financial aid from the government often carries with it the burden of accepting statutory restrictions. When faced with demands by the U.S. Department of Education to execute an assurance that the college did not discriminate on the basis of sex, the college administration refused. The administration, joined by some students, then filed suit claiming, in part, that their First Amendment free exercise rights were being infringed. They also claimed that in order to maintain institutional autonomy, the school accepted no direct state or federal financial assistance. Many of the students who attended Grove City, however, did receive financial aid in the form of Basic Educational Opportunity Grants (BEOG's). Viewing this federal aid to students as a form of indirect assistance to the college, the U.S. Supreme Court chided plaintiffs that their First Amendment concerns deserved little serious attention:

> Congress is free to attach reasonable and unambiguous conditions to federal financial assistance that educational institutions are not obligated to accept. Grove City may terminate its participation in the BEOG program and thus avoid the requirements of [Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972] § 901(a). Students affected by the Department's action may either take their BEOG's elsewhere or attend Grove City without federal financial assistance. Requiring Grove City to comply with Title IX's prohibition of discrimination as a condition for its continued eligibility to participate in the BEOG program infringes no First Amendment rights of the College or its students.[12]

Grove City College was not a seminary; it was not engaged in the selection and training of ministers. As discussed above, that process is generally entitled to more scrupulous constitutional protection.[13] What the *Grove City* case does indicate is that factors other than just a school's religious mission must be evaluated before deciding that a particular statutory law does or does not apply to a seminary.

D. Consult Your Local Attorney

Everything that has already been said about the application of the civil law to seminaries, and everything that is said below about specific legal issues, is subject to this directive: consult your local attorney. Some seminaries rely on the diocese's or order's regular counsel for legal advice. Others have their own attorney or they consult different attorneys on different legal issues. What is important is that each seminary be able to call upon legal counsel who know the school's structure, purpose, operation and relationship to the church, and who are familiar with the current federal, state and local laws that might impact issues facing the school. The laws in effect in a particular jurisdiction differ from those in effect elsewhere and court opinions regularly issue that interpret and modify the way those laws are applied. The facts and circumstances that give rise to legal problems one day are never the same as those that initiate a similar problem later or elsewhere. All that a discussion such as this one can hope to do is present general principles. For application of those principles to specific situations, consult your local attorney.

II. PRIVILEGES AFFECTING CONFIDENTIALITY

Questions concerning the confidentiality of information continually arise between the church and the civil law. The church has a long tradition of keeping private information confidential. From the seal of the confessional and the secrecy of tribunal proceedings to the sanctity of spiritual direction and the sensitivity of marriage counseling, the church has stood for the proposition that people can trust the church to keep their confidences. By contrast, the civil law holds high the principle that the quest for truth requires full disclosure of all known facts and that all citizens have a duty to disclose what they know so that justice may be fairly and properly dispensed.[14] The only exceptions to full disclosure that the civil law allows are known as privileges.

Privileges are specific exceptions to the civil law's general rule of full disclosure. Where a privilege applies, certain communications may be kept confidential so long as the privilege's required conditions are met. Privileges reflect the society's judgment that certain relationships must be fostered and protected even if some information remains secret as a result. The types of communication commonly protected from disclosure by privileges are attorney-client, doctor-patient, and priest-penitent. Other similar communications are protected by the laws of some states, but all privileges are subject to state law and vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Confidential information that may be privileged in one state under certain circumstance may have to be disclosed elsewhere or under different circumstances. Therefore, only the general parameters of those privileges that may arise in the seminary context will be reviewed.

A. Priest/Penitent Privilege

In 1989, Lutheran Pastor Ernest Knoche was subpoenaed to appear before a federal grand jury investigating charges of arson. Four years earlier, Pastor Knoche provided counseling to a family suspected of burning down a house purchased by a black family in a white neighborhood. The prosecutors wanted to know what the family had discussed with Pastor Knoche. Replying on the clergyman-penitent privilege, the pastor refused to disclose his counselees' communications. It was his position that family counseling was an important part of his ministry, and that confidentiality was essential to successful counseling. If his clients could not be open and forthright with him and each other, their reconciliation, forgiveness and ultimately redemption would be imperiled.

The appellate court that reviewed Pastor Knoche's claim of privilege noted that every state has some form of privilege for communications to members of the clergy.[15] Although differing from state to state, the privilege generally protects personal communications made with an expectation of privacy to a minister acting in a pastoral capacity. A member of the clergy is usually defined as a priest, pastor, minister, rabbi, "or other similar functionary of a religious organization, or an individual reasonably believed to be by the person consulting him."[16] Typically the person consulting the pastor can claim the protection of the privilege, or the clergyman can claim it on that person's behalf. However, the privilege can be waived and special problems can arise when the individual later wants information disclosed that the minister may still be bound by church discipline to keep secret.[17]

Applying these general rules to Pastor Knoche's appeal, the court found that he was a clergyman but questioned whether he had been consulted in his pastoral capacity with the expectation of privacy. Since there was insufficient evidence for a determination of that issue, the court had to remand the case for further proceedings. On remand, the court would take evidence on such questions as: (1) the relationships of all persons present during the communications, (2) whether all such persons were reasonably required to be present

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to further the pastoral purpose of the counseling, (3) the usual pastoral counseling practices of the particular denomination, and (4) whether those practices were followed in this instance. Only after gathering such information would the court be able to determine if the priest/penitent privilege should apply. Thus it can be seen that not every communication, even with ordained clergy, is privileged. Where more than one person is present or when the clergyman is not acting in a pastoral capacity at the time of the communication, future confidentiality is doubtful. Add to these factors the question of whether the communication occurred "in the usual course of the discipline" of the church and the circumstances that can defeat the privilege are multiplied.[18]

Questions can also be raised about whether the person receiving the communication is a member of the clergy. In two well-known cases, women religious attempted to use the priest/penitent statutes in their respective states as shields protecting them from having to testify.[19] One succeeded and one did not. The former was Sister Dominic Rowe, who refused to divulge conversations between herself and a postulant seeking admission to the School Sisters of Notre Dame. At the time of the conversations, Sr. Dominic was acting in the role of spiritual director to the postulant. She presented evidence that a spiritual director is a recognized office within the church and is considered to be a ministerial position. Because spiritual direction is "undertaken by priests and sisters alike," the court upheld Sr. Dominic's right to invoke the priest/penitent privilege.[20]

Dominican Sister Margaret Murtha of St. Boniface Convent in Jersey City, New Jersey, did not fare as well. Having been jailed for refusing to testify before a grand jury during a murder investigation, she had to appeal for a release from custody while seeking to assert the priest/penitent privilege to avoid testifying against one of her students. The student was a suspect in the investigation and had met with Sr. Margaret the night of the murder. She had been counseling him for several years, sometimes as often as once a week. This was not enough, however, to put their conversations the night of the incident on a confidential basis. In ruling against Sr. Margaret, the court noted that she did not perform the religious functions of a priest within the Roman Catholic Church and that her relationship to the suspect was basically that of a teacher and student. The court also concluded that when she spoke with the student that night, she was not acting "as a spiritual advisor in the course of the discipline or practice of the religious body to which [s]he belongs," which is a requirement of the New Jersey statute.[21] Finally, the court added that Sr. Margaret waived any right to claim the privilege when she went to the police station and reported the body her student had led her to.[22]

Taken together, the cases of Pastor Knoche and Sisters Dominic and Margaret demonstrate that many variables come into play when determining the applicability of the priest/penitent privilege. Within the seminary context, there can be no certainty about when communications will be protected from disclosure and when not. Some circumstances such as the confessional and spiritual direction will usually be protected. Others such as faculty-student counseling and group retreats may not, even though ordained clergy are participants. The facts and circumstances of each situation, and the terms of the priest/penitent statute in the particular state, together will determine the viability of a claim of privilege.

While this discussion of the priest/penitent privilege has focused on oral communications, the same factors reviewed above apply to written documents.[23] A written communication to a member of the clergy, if given him in his pastoral capacity with the expectation of privacy, is generally protected from disclosure. Just as with oral communications, however, the privilege can be lost, if, for example, others have access to the document. The nature of the document and the purpose for its creation will often play a large part in determining the degree of confidentiality enjoyed.[24] Since seminaries generate a large variety of documents for many different purposes, there can be no blanket rule conferring confidentiality under the umbrella of the priest/penitent privilege. Indeed, in most cases, whether involving student records, faculty personnel files, general correspondence or financial reports, the priest/penitent privilege will not be available. Even when the seminary is considered to be "church", "[i]nformation in the possession of the church has always been subject to civil process. This is precisely why states . . . have adopted statutes creating a priest/penitent privilege."[25]

If a written document or oral communication is not protected from disclosure by the terms of the priest/penitent privilege, it is possible that another of the privileges prevalent in the civil law may apply. Therefore, a brief review of two of those privileges is appropriate here. In addition, before concluding this discussion of privileges affecting confidentiality, the effect of child abuse reporting statutes on privileged communications must be noted.

B. Attorney/Client Privilege

This is a good place to re-emphasize the important advice given earlier in this paper: consult your local attorney. When you do consult your school's legal counsel, you may do so in the confidence that the attorney may not divulge any information you, as the client, communicates to him or her. This is because the attorney/client privilege protects the confidential character of the professional relationship between lawyers and their clients. The civil law protects this relationship in order to foster open and candid communication by persons seeking legal advice without fear that the attorney could later be compelled to disclose confidential information.[26]

As with the priest/penitent privilege, the attorney/client privilege is subject to statutory and other limitations and interpretations. It also applies to both oral and written communications, and it can be waived by the client. The attorney is bound by the privilege with regard to all confidential communications received during the professional relationship even after his or her employment as counsel is terminated. However, any information received outside the attorney/client relationship, such as before the attorney is retained, is not privileged against disclosure. Similarly, information received by an attorney acting in a non-legal capacity, such as a member of a seminary's board of trustees who also happens to be a lawyer, is not protected from compelled or voluntary disclosure. Although the privilege is respected by all courts, it is subject to varying interpretations in different jurisdictions. Therefore, when consulting the attorneys representing the seminary about a sensitive matter, it is important to clarify the application of the privilege at the outset.

C. Physician/Patient Privilege

Although the civil law affords privileged status, in varying degree, to other relationships such as husband/wife and parent/child, the privilege most likely to be invoked in cases of psychological screening and evaluation is the physician/patient privilege. Next to the priest/penitent privilege, however, the physician/patient privilege may be the most complicated and therefore the most misunderstood. This is so, in part, because the privilege is solely a creature of statute and varies from state-to-state. The policy behind the privilege is protection of the patient, both from erroneous diagnosis or treatment and from public humiliation or disgrace. Thus, further confusion stems from the fact that the privilege may be overridden when it is deemed in the patient's best interest to do so. Also, other important public policies, such as prevention of crime or avoiding a miscarriage of justice, may be found to outweigh the public's interest in preserving the privilege. Add to this the fact that the physician/patient privilege may not apply to some psychotherapeutic situations and the applicability of this privilege to screening or counseling becomes problematic. Before turning to that specific situation, however, the usual scope of the privilege should be examined.[27]

In general, the physician/patient privilege is said to protect a patient from having a doctor disclose confidential information conveyed to the doctor during the physician/patient relationship where the purpose of the communication is diagnosis or treatment by the doctor.[28] From this definition, it is obvious that not all communications to a doctor, even during the physician/patient relationship, are subject to the privilege, and communications outside the relationship clearly cannot be expected to remain private. In addition, the presence of a third party during the communication, or with access to it, can destroy the confidentiality unless that person is necessary to the diagnosis or treatment.[29]

Civil courts are generally reluctant to expand the scope of privileges affecting confidentiality, including the doctor/patient privilege. One federal court of appeals, in refusing to grant privileged status to psychotherapist/patient relationships, quoted the United States Supreme Court as saying "that privileges 'are not lightly created nor expansively construed, for they are in derogation of the search for the truth.'"[30] Under these circumstances, it is typically up to the legislatures to determine by statute which relationships and communications will be afforded confidentiality and which will not. Yet even where state law does protect certain communications, courts will often apply the law very narrowly and will overrule the privilege in the interest of other important public policy considerations.[51]

Alaska is one state which does include psychotherapists among those members of the healing professions who are barred from revealing their patients' confidential communications. In 1991, an Alaska man convicted of child abuse in the molestation of a four-year-old boy appealed his conviction on the ground that certain evidence should not have been admitted at his trial.[52] His complaint was that the minister who was counseling him had violated both the priest/penitent and the psychotherapist/patient privileges when he reported the child abuse to the state authorities.[53] The trial judge did bar the minister from testifying directly about his communications with the defendant, but the judge ruled that the report to the authorities was required by the state reporting statute despite the privilege. The appellate court affirmed the decision, noting that the state statute mandating confidentiality by psychotherapists contains a specific exception in cases of child abuse.

The Alaska case is instructive for several reasons. The first is that, while there is no general privilege for psychotherapist communications, many states have incorporated them into the doctor/patient privilege. Other states have enacted specific psychotherapist/patient statutes and some have even applied a constitutional right-of-privacy to the relationship.[54] Yet even where the privilege has been recognized, civil courts will still weigh the purpose of the privilege against other considerations, often finding sufficient reason to require disclosure of confidential information.[55] In addition, while some state statutes might extend the privilege to any certified counselor, as Alaska's did, others severely limit the class of professionals to which the requirement of confidentiality applies.[56] As should be obvious, therefore, the existence, scope and application of the psychotherapist/patient privilege in a particular state could greatly affect the confidentiality of communications received during psychological screening, evaluation and counseling of seminarians.

D. Child Abuse Reporting Statutes

One other point on which the Alaska case is a classic example regards the effect of child abuse reporting requirements on privileged communications. Each and every state has adopted legislation aimed at stopping incidents of child abuse. A typical provision of these statutes is one requiring suspected abuse to be reported to a state agency charged with protection of children. The particulars of the reporting requirement differ from state to state but the need for reporting is uniform. Sadly, the need for all segments of the church, including seminaries, to be aware of and comply with reporting requirements is all too obvious. As the National Conference of Catholic Bishops said in their November 19, 1992, resolution concerning sexual abuse by members of the clergy:

> We pledge ourselves to one another to return to our dioceses and there to examine ourselves and prayerfully our response to sexual abuse; to assure ourselves that our response is appropriate and effective; and to be certain that our people are aware of and confident in that response.
>
> Among the elements to be considered for ongoing response, we continue to recommend the following:
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> * * *
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> —Comply with the obligations of civil law as regards reporting of the incident and cooperating with the investigation.

There are many ways in which seminaries might become aware of possible abuse, especially sexual abuse, of a minor. Confession, counseling, spiritual direction and psychological testing are some of the scenarios in which information about abuse might come to light.[37] Since each of these presents different and numerous ramifications with regard to the resulting legal and canonical obligations, only a general overview of civil reporting requirements will be included here. When confronted with an actual situation involving possible abuse, legal, canonical, and psychological expertise, as appropriate and necessary, should be engaged immediately.

Child abuse reporting statutes vary considerably in specifying who needs to report and under what kind of circumstances. Each specific statute, in the context of state cases or regulations developing key terms or defining duties, becomes the point of departure for determining the legally required response to an incident. In some jurisdictions, only school, health, or child care personnel are required to report suspected child abuse. In other jurisdictions, there is no such limitation and every person having reason to believe that a child has been abused has a duty to report. Even where there may be no statutory duty to report, special attention must be given to whether a report nonetheless should be made. The failure to make a required report is usually a misdemeanor and can result in a jail term or fine or both.[38] In one case, the pastor of the South Bay United Pentecostal Church and his assistant, the principal of the South Bay Christian Academy, were convicted in state court for failing to report a case of child abuse to the child protection agency.[39] The victim of the abuse was a student at the church school; the perpetrator was her stepfather, who was also a minister in the church. When the student reported her stepfather's improper sexual conduct to the pastor, he confronted the stepfather, who confessed to the behavior and wrote a letter of apology to the student. The pastor and the assistant pastor decided to handle the matter within the church and disciplined the stepfather, including revoking his ministerial license. When the student later reported the abuse to the San Diego Police, the resulting investigation led to the convictions of the two pastors for failing to report.

On appeal, the pastors unsuccessfully argued that they were not "child care custodians" within the meaning of the reporting statute.[40] They also argued that their convictions were unconstitutional under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. It was their position they were acting in a pastoral capacity when dealing with this situation and that handling it within the church was a decision motivated by sincere religious beliefs. The appellate court accepted their argument but held that the reporting statute serves a compelling state interest: "The compelling state interest furthered by the reporting statute, protecting children from child abuse, justifies any burden on appellants' religious practice."[41] Therefore, the court ruled that the convictions did not violate the First Amendment.

As the above example illustrates, most state reporting statutes do not allow those who receive a complaint the discretion to perform an independent investigation or evaluation of the basis for the charge. Typically, any and every non-frivolous complaint must be reported. The investigative function rests, sometimes exclusively, with the governmental entity providing child protective services. This raises special pastoral difficulties when individuals are placed in the position of having to report their peers, their superiors or their students for any complaint of child abuse, whether they believe it or not. Under this kind of statute, it is virtually impossible for a person receiving a complaint to exercise the judgment not to report in a doubtful case.[42]

In virtually every jurisdiction, the reporting statute has placed some limitation on the availability of the statutory privileges that declare certain communications confidential, namely, physician/patient, psychotherapist/patient, and clergy/penitent. In some states, for example, the priest/penitent privilege has been abrogated in cases of child abuse except for information learned in the confessional. In a 1990 case, three religious counselors employed by the Community Chapel, an evangelical Christian church, were convicted for failure to report three separate incidents of child abuse. Each of the counselors had learned about abuses during counseling sessions. Only one of the three was an ordained minister, and he successfully convinced the appellate court that clergy were statutorily exempt from the state's reporting requirements. Holding that the exemption was limited to situations where clergy are acting in that capacity when learning of suspected abuse, the court reversed his conviction. The other two defendants did not fare as well. They were not ordained ministers and did not have a statutory defense. They argued that the First Amendment protected them from prosecution because the counseling was a religious practice of the church. The court analyzed their claims under the Free Exercise, Establishment, and Free Speech Clauses, and in each case concluded that the First Amendment was not offended by these prosecutions. The convictions were therefore affirmed.[43]

III. ACCESS TO APPLICANT/SEMINARIAN DATA

The issue of access to records of applicants and students of seminaries has many facets. It involves questions of who may or must have access to educational records and under what circumstances. As will become evident from the discussion below, disclosure and failure to disclose both can have negative ramifications if they run afoul of federal or state law.

A. Recordkeeping Requirements

Every educational institution, including seminaries, keeps records on its students and employees. Records are essential for effective management of the institution and for evaluation of student and employee[44] performance. In some instances federal and state laws may require educational institutions to maintain records. In others it may simply be a matter of good management policy.

1. Statutory Requirements

Both federal and state laws may require seminaries to keep records on its students. Federal recordkeeping requirements will normally come into play as a result of a seminary enrolling a student who receives federal financial assistance, such as a grant, loan or guaranteed loan under any of the federal programs that provide assistance for students attending institutions of higher education. For example, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"),[45] discussed in more detail below, applies to any educational institution that receives funds under any program administered by the U.S. Department of Education.[46] This includes funds received indirectly through students who receive federal financial assistance such as a Pell Grant.

Assuming that a seminary enrolls such a student, FERPA requires that seminary to maintain a record of each request for access to and each disclosure of personally identifiable information from the educational records of the student.[47] The record must include (i) the person who has requested or received the information and (ii) the legitimate interest the person had in requesting or obtaining the information.[48] These requirements do not apply to persons who have the written consent of the student for access to the records or to seminary officials, including instructors, who have legitimate educational interests in the records.[49]

In addition to FERPA, there are other federal recordkeeping requirements for student aid programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965.[50] Seminaries with students participating in these programs are required to maintain current records on students' progress,[51] include in each student's record a statement of educational purpose signed by the student,[52] and verify student aid application information.[53] There are many other requirements implementing student aid programs. The regulations are detailed and complex. Seminaries with students receiving federal assistance should review the applicable program regulations to insure that they are in compliance. Failure to comply with the regulations can lead to administrative proceedings which could result in a limitation on or suspension of the participation of the seminary and its students in the affected student assistance programs.[54]

Where applicable, state and local certification and license procedures may place recordkeeping requirements on seminaries. For example, an institution may be required to keep complete and accurate records relating to admissions, enrollment, grades, scholarships, credit transfers, transcripts, graduates, and other essentials.[55] If an institution ceases to operate, it may be required to file copies of student records with government agencies.[56]

Also, regional accrediting agencies may require certain recordkeeping requirements that flow from federal regulations. The U.S. Department of Education's procedures for recognizing accrediting agencies require those agencies to obtain information on educational effectiveness, in part, by verifying that student satisfaction of degree requirements is reasonably documented.[57]

2. Document Retention Policies

Like other institutions seminaries should establish document retention policies. In the area of student records the policy should establish clear guidelines as to what records will be retained, for how long, where they will be retained, and what records will be discarded. Seminaries may wish to create multiple files for each seminarian. For example separate files may be maintained for psychological reports, academic records, field education records, etc. The purpose here is not to present a model retention policy, but rather simply to emphasize the need for the seminary to have a policy.

While document retention policies are primarily a management issue, they do have some civil law implications. As discussed above, federal and state laws may required seminaries to keep certain records, *e.g.*, FERPA and student financial aid programs. In addition, the seminary from time to time may come into possession of information implicating a seminary in criminal or civil wrongdoing, *e.g.*, fraud, child abuse, etc. Improper handling of this information could expose the seminary to criminal or civil law actions. If a seminary receives such sensitive information, local counsel should be consulted immediately to determine the proper course of action. Likewise, local counsel can also assist the seminary in developing record retention policies to insure that they comply with any applicable civil laws.

B. Disclosure of Student Records

At the federal level FERPA is the primary statute regulating disclosure of student records. It specifies under what circumstances student records can or must be disclosed to students, educational institutions and others. State and local laws may also apply to disclosure of records. For purposes of this discussion FERPA will be the focal point. Seminaries should consult local counsel regarding the extent to which state laws may also apply to disclosure of student records.

1. To Students

As a general rule FERPA grants students who are eighteen years and older and attend an educational institution that receives funds under a program administered by the U.S. Department of Education the right to inspect and review their education records.[58] With certain narrow exceptions the term education records is defined very broadly to include records, files and other materials that contain information directly related to a student and are maintained by an educational institution.[59] The exceptions to the definition of educational records include (i) records of instructional, administrative or other educational personnel that are in the sole possession of the maker thereof and are not available to any other person other than a substitute,[60] (ii) employment records of a student that relate solely to employment,[61] and (iii) records of a treating physician or psychologist that are made in connection with treatment to the student and are not available to anyone other than persons providing treatment.[62]

Other than the definitional exclusions[63] noted above, FERPA recognizes only three other exceptions to the general rule that students must be allowed to inspect and review their education records.

FERPA does not require institutions to disclose to students information regarding their parents financial status.[64] With respect to confidential letters of recommendation, FERPA does not require disclosure if the letters were placed in the education records prior to January 1, 1975. For letters of recommendations placed in the education records after January 1, 1975, FERPA does not require disclosure provided that the student has signed an appropriate waiver of access.[65]

In order to insure that students will be aware of their rights, institutions subject to FERPA must adopt a policy regarding FERPA.[66] That policy must be in writing and inform students of, among other things, their rights to inspect and review their records, to request correction of their education records, to have a hearing if that request is denied, and to include in the records a statement commenting on contested records.[67]

It is important to note that the right granted to students under FERPA is to inspect and review education records, not necessarily to copy them. If its policy so provides an institution may deny a request by a student for copies of records if it believes it has legitimate cause.[68] Institutions may also charge a fee for copies of education records, but may not charge a fee to search and retrieve the education records of a student.[69]

2. To Seminary

Information about applicants and seminarians may come to the seminary from the individual himself, from other third parties outside the seminary, and from processes and records generated from within the seminary. Information provided by the individual to the seminary generally should pose no problem because the information has been freely provided by the individual.

With respect to information provided by third parties outside the seminary, prudence counsels that, when possible, the seminary should obtain the written consent of the applicant or seminarian for the release of the information from the third party, even though this might not be required in all situations. For example, under FERPA a university which an applicant for a seminary formerly attended may disclose information about the applicant to the seminary provided certain conditions are met.[70] Those conditions include that the student (i) is notified that the university will release the information, (ii) is provided, upon request, a copy of the information dissolved, and (iii) is given an opportunity to challenge the information released.[71]

Within the seminary itself education student records can be disclosed to seminary officials, including instructors, who have been determined by the seminary to have legitimate educational interests in the records.[72] Thus, FERPA would not require student consent before two instructors could discuss information about a student's educational development.

3. *To Diocese*

Dioceses and diocesan bishops have a legitimate interest in the religious formation and educational development of seminarians they sponsor. In the usual course of events this will normally result in the disclosure of students' records by the seminary to the diocese or diocesan officials. In the event that both the diocese and the seminary are part of the same civil entity,[73] *e.g.*, the seminary is part of a single diocesan corporation that includes the chancery, disclosure of information among officials of the seminary and the chancery who have a legitimate interest in development of students would not seem to pose a serious concern under FERPA.[74]

For seminaries that have their own separate civil law identity, disclosure of education records to diocesan officials should be treated in a fashion similar to disclosure to others. *See* Part III(B)(4) below. An exception would be where a diocesan official also serves as an official of the seminary. In that situation there would seem to be no problem in disclosures to that person as a seminary official.

During FERPA's rulemaking process the United States Catholic Conference requested that an exception to FERPA be made for the non-academic records kept by seminaries. These records contain information on the spiritual and psychological development of candidates and pertain to their suitability for the priesthood rather than to their educational performances. The former U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare ("HEW") recognized that subjecting these records to FERPA coverage involved complex constitutional questions and interpretations of U.S. Supreme Court decisions. Nonetheless, HEW demurred on the issue and indicated that this type of question would have to be decided on a case-by-case basis.[75] To date this issue has not been litigated under FERPA and, therefore, there is no clearcut answer. While strong constitutional arguments could be made against FERPA coverage for non-academic records of seminaries, because there is uncertainty the prudent course of action would be for seminaries to obtain prior written consent before disclosing seminarian records to parties outside the seminary, including the diocese and its personnel. See Part III(C)(2)(a) below.

4. To Others

With certain limited exceptions discussed below, seminaries subject to FERPA may not disclose personally identifying information from students' education records to parties outside the seminary without written consent of the student.[76] The written consent must:

1) specify the records that may be disclosed;
2) state the purpose of disclosure; and
3) identify the party or parties to whom the disclosure must be made.[77]

If the student requests, the seminary must provide a copy of the disclosed records to the student.[78]

Exceptions to FERPA's general requirement of written consent include disclosure:

1) to other educational institutions, provided appropriate notice is given to the student;
2) to certain government officials;
3) in connection with a student's application for financial aid;
4) to accrediting agencies;
5) to appropriate persons in an emergency in order to protect the health or safety of any person; and
6) in response to a judicial order or subpoena.[79]

Seminaries may also disclose what is known as "directory information" without prior consent, provided students are put on notice that such information will be disclosed and are provide timely opportunity to inform the seminary that any or all of the information should not be released without prior consent. Under FERPA, directory information is defined to include a student's:

1) name;
2) address;
3) telephone listing;
4) date and place of birth;
5) major field of study;
6) participation in activities;
7) dates of attendance;
8) degrees and awards received; and
9) other most recent educational institution attended by the student.[80]

Clearly, the issue of disclosure of seminarians' records is a sensitive one. It would be prudent to err on the side of caution and to obtain, where possible, student consent before any disclosure of student records is made to outside parties. It would also be prudent for seminary administrators to reveiw existing procedures and forms, in consultation with local counsel, to insure compliance with applicable provisions of FERPA.

C. When Disclosure Can Be A Problem

Disclosure of records of seminarians can cause problems for the seminary in the civil arena if the disclosure violates some statutory duty or results in tortious conduct. In these situations seminaries may be exposed to statutory penalties or monetary damages, or both. Thus, it is critical for seminaries to be aware of civil law requirements and to handle seminarians' records with the care, confidentiality and sensitivity that they deserve. This will go a long way toward eliminating the potential for civil law liability.

1. Statutory Penalties

Educational institutions, including seminaries, may be subjected to statutory penalties if they disclose student records in violation of federal or state law. Because it is not feasible here to discuss the various state laws that can differ from state to state, the focus will be on federal statutory requirements.

As discussed above, FERPA prohibits disclosure of student records without written consent of the student in many situations. Any penalties that may result from FERPA violations will likely be the result of administrative, rather than judicial, action. Civil courts have consistently held that no private cause of action exists under FERPA for an individual to sue an educational institution for FERPA violations.[81] While institutions may not be subject to civil lawsuits for FERPA violations, they can be subjected to administrative proceedings.

In enacting FERPA, Congress entrusted its enforcement to the U.S. Department of Education.[82] FERPA regulations set out procedures for filing and resolving complaints.[83] The emphasis under FERPA is on voluntary compliance.[84] If the voluntary compliance cannot be achieved the Department of Education has the authority to initiate administrative proceedings to terminate federal assistances programs in which the institution and its students participate.[85]

While it is unlikely that a disclosure violation of FERPA by a seminary will ultimately result in termination of federal program funding, resolving complaints and defending against administrative proceedings is both costly and time consuming. The key to reducing risks in this area is to avoid complaints in the first instance. The best way to accomplish this is for the seminary, in consultation with local counsel, to be aware of the requirements of FERPA, and other applicable federal and state laws, and to initiate appropriate steps to insure compliance.

2. Civil Damages

Father Michael Higgins sued the Diocese of San Diego and Bishop Leo Maher for invasion of privacy, defamation, and wrongful termination, as well as intentional and negligent infliction of emotional distress. In dismissing the complaint, the trial court ruled that the facts alleged in the complaint involved ecclesiastical disputes beyond the competence of the civil courts.[86] Those facts revealed that in 1980, Bishop Maher confronted Higgins with allegations of "social misconduct," which Higgins denied. Seeking first to pursue a canonical remedy, Fr. Higgins complained to the Holy See about "false accusations." The Bishop responded that Higgins' correspondence to Rome was untrue. In 1982, the Bishop suspended Fr. Higgins because his continuing social conduct was causing grave public scandal. The priest was then sent to a church-affiliated treatment center for psychological therapy. After his release, news of his psychological condition allegedly spread throughout the church, making it impossible for him to retain an assignment. He claimed that there was an organized effort underway to discredit him. Once again, Fr. Higgins pursued a canonical remedy but without success, so he sued in civil court.

In reviewing the case, a state court of appeal in California said:

> [Father] Higgins's complaint contains causes of action incorporating the history and asserting that various of its facets constitute common tort laws. The publication of the details of Higgins's [psychiatric treatment] is characterized as an invasion of privacy. The publication of false accusations of assault and social misconduct is the basis for a cause of action for defamation.
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> * * *
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> The making of accusations of misconduct; the discussion of same within the order; the recommendation of psychological treatment; the infliction, whether intentionally or negligently, of emotional distress—these are all activities and results which will often, if not usually, attend the difficult process by which priestly faculties are terminated. If our civil courts enter upon disputes between bishops and priests because of allegations of defamation, mental distress and invasion of privacy, it is difficult to conceive the termination case which could not result in a sustainable lawsuit.[87]

Viewing such a result as unacceptable, the court finally concluded that the torts were simply too intertwined with questions of selecting and disciplining clergy to be actionable in civil court.[88]

Canon 220 provides that: "No one is permitted to damage unlawfully the good reputation which another person enjoys nor to violate the right of another person to protect his or her own privacy."[89] Yet as the *Higgins* case demonstrates, canon law does not create rights actionable in civil court. The remedy for violation of canon law must be pursued exclusively within the church.[90] On the other hand, as the *Higgins* case implies, if the allegedly wrongful conduct is unrelated to the ecclesiastical functions of the church, the fact that church personnel or institutions are involved might not prevent a civil suit for damages. In the context of the records and data a seminary maintains concerning its students, the two most likely complaints a seminarian might bring against the school are the same two Fr. Higgins attempted—invasion of privacy and defamation. If the student could convince a civil court that the seminary was not engaged in an ecclesiastical function when it acted wrongfully toward him, his lawsuit might not meet the same fate as Fr. Higgins'.[91] For this reason, it would be useful to review the situations which could give rise to invasion of privacy and defamation claims.

a. Invasion of Privacy

Just as it is necessary to distinguish clearly between the canonical right to protect one's privacy and a civil action for invasion of privacy,[92] it is also necessary to emphasize that the latter is not based upon the constitutional right to privacy. The constitutional right to privacy protects individual citizens against certain governmental intrusions into their personal affairs;[93] while a civil action for invasion of privacy affords individuals a remedy for the unwarranted public exposure of their private lives by other persons.[94] Virtually every state recognizes a civil action for invasion of privacy, although there are still a few exceptions.[95] Typically, in order to recover damages, a plaintiff must show: "(1) the publication, (2) absent any waiver or privilege, (3) of private matters in which the public has no legitimate concern, (4) such as to bring shame or humiliation to a person of ordinary sensibilities."[96] It is the second element listed—waiver or privilege—that most often comes into play when a church is sued for invasion of privacy. Two cases out of Oklahoma illustrate the point.

In *Guinn v. Collinsville Church of Christ*, elders of the church confronted a member of the community about rumors that she had become sexually involved, while not married, with a nonmember of the community.[97] They warned her that unless she stopped her sinful conduct, she would be publicly branded a fornicator for violating church doctrine based on scripture. Later, after denunciation from the pulpit, Ms. Guinn sued the elders and the Collinsville Church for invasion of privacy and other wrongful conduct. When the case reached the Oklahoma Supreme Court, that court ruled that for the period of time in which she was a member of the church community, she consented to its discipline. Church membership was held to constitute an effective waiver of all of the consequences of such discipline. In so ruling, the court said:

> [Church membership] may be severed freely by a member's positive act at any time. Until it is so terminated, the church has authority to prescribe and follow disciplinary ordinances without fear of interference by the state. The First Amendment will protect and shield the religious body from liability for the activities carried on pursuant to the exercise of church discipline. Within the context of ecclesiastical discipline, churches enjoy an absolute privilege from scrutiny by the secular authority.[98]

Termination of membership also terminates a member's consent, however, making the wrongful behavior of the church after withdrawal actionable in civil court. Therefore, even though the Collinsville Church of Christ believed that no one could resign membership in that church, the court said that civil law does recognize resignation. As two other Oklahoman women discovered, however, effective resignation requires more than inactivity.

The Church of Latter-day Saints of Chickasha, Oklahoma, notified two sisters that a disciplinary hearing was being called to terminate their membership. Neither sister appeared at the hearing to defend herself. After the hearing, letters were prepared notifying the two women that they were being expelled from the church for fornication. One letter was hand-delivered by a lay leader of the congregation; the other was sent by mail and opened by the addressee's husband. The sisters brought suit in a state court against the local church, the church leaders, and the national church. They alleged defamation, invasion of privacy, and intentional infliction of emotional distress. They sought both compensatory and punitive damages. They also sought discovery of the church's records concerning the disciplinary process. The trial court denied their discovery request, holding that the information was privileged from disclosure under the First Amendment to the Constitution. Defendants then successfully moved for a summary judgement and plaintiffs appealed.[99]

Reaffirming its earlier decision in the *Guinn* case, the Supreme Court of Oklahoma held that a church's privilege to expel members, free of civil court supervision, extends to acts and statements subsequent to excommunication if made in furtherance of enforcing the church's disciplinary order.[100] Concerning plaintiffs' specific claims, the court noted that the parishioners had never affirmatively withdrawn from church membership. Silence and inactivity, the court noted, are not enough to sever a member's relationship with a church or to terminate ecclesiastical authority. While plaintiffs remained members, they could not complain about acts taken against them. However, the appellate court was unable to determine whether any of the acts complained of post-dated the plaintiffs' expulsion. Therefore, the summary judgment was affirmed in part and the case remanded for a determination of that issue.

As can be seen from these two cases, so long as the alleged invasion of privacy occurs within the proper confines of church discipline, it is protected from civil court review. However, once the allegedly wrongful conduct goes outside the scope of the discipline, either by time or by subject matter, the ecclesiastical privilege no longer obtains and the church member's consent to the conduct ceases. For these reasons, and as a standard precautionary practice, it makes sense to obtain written consents from students covering the necessary dissemination of personal information possessed by the seminary. Many seminaries already have written policies concerning access to student records and require students to sign waivers permitting release of data.[101] Especially where psychological testing, screening, and counseling records are concerned, limited disclosure to the sponsoring diocese or others may be essential, so a signed release in advance is recommended.

Finally, it should be mentioned that dioceses, seminaries, and religious institutes have an affirmative obligation to consult with one another concerning applicants and candidates for the priesthood who have applied to, attended, or are transferring from, another seminary.[102] As a required aspect of the selection of priests by the church, this consultation should be protected from examination by civil authorities under the ecclesiastical immunity of the First Amendment.[103] However, in line with the earlier admonition to seek other civil law protections before raising the First Amendment shield,[104] there is another privilege that should be explored first. Since seminaries engage in such consultation out of a common interest, and in order to protect the church and its members, their exchange of information may come under the civil law's "common interest" privilege.[105] This privilege is qualified in that it is lost if the communication is done with malice.[106] However, if made in good faith, such communications are privileged when:

> the circumstances are such as to lead any one of several persons having a common interest in a particular subject matter correctly or reasonably to believe that facts exist which another sharing such common interest is entitled to know.[107]

Plainly, seminaries sharing information about the selection and qualifications of candidates for the priesthood fall within such circumstances.[108] Therefore, their communications should not be considered to invade the privacy of applicants or seminarians.

b. Defamation of Character

When sisters Jeanne Hadnot and Suzette Ellis sued their church, they claimed they were victims of libel and slander as well as invasion of privacy.[109] Although the claims are similar, they are distinguished by the fact that truth is a defense to the former but not to the latter.[110] In other words, a communication alleged to invade someone's privacy can be truthful and still be actionable.[111] For libel or slander, however, it is necessary that the information disseminated be false.[112] This means that an additional defense to an action for defamation is to prove that what was said (slander) or written (libel) about the plaintiff is in fact, true.[113] This defense is additional because all of the defenses and privileges discussed above concerning invasion of privacy also apply to defamation of character.[114] This means, for example, that communication of information which later proves to be false could still be privileged against a defamation action if made within the confines of church discipline or only to persons with a common interest in protecting the church and its members from harm.[115] Again, however, the benefit of a privilege can be lost where the purpose of the communication is malicious.[116]

When Rev. W.D. Joiner was stripped of his ministerial license by the Louisiana District Board of the United Pentecostal Church, he sued each board member individually claiming, *inter alia*, defamation of character. On appeal from a dismissal of the complaint, the Louisiana Court of Appeal held that Joiner's claims were barred both by the "common interest" privilege and by the First Amendment to the Constitution.[117] The court found no evidence of malice on the part of the board members who investigated and sustained charges that Joiner had acted illegally and immorally in certain business transactions. The court also said that "[t]o allow defamation suits to be litigated to the fullest extent against members of a religious board who are merely discharging the duty which has been entrusted to them by their church could have a potentially chilling effect on the performance of those duties and could very well inhibit the free communication of important ideas and candid opinions.[118] This would pose a grave danger, the court warned, to the free exercise of those rights protected by the First Amendment.

In a very recent case, the Alaska Supreme Court failed to heed the warning of the Louisiana court. In this case, the Executive Presbyter of the Presbytery of the Yukon in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was sued by a pastor who had served for two years at a parish in Anchorage.[119] When the pastor left Alaska, he was "called" by a parish in Tennessee to become pastor there. But when the Tennessee church contacted the Executive Presbyter of the Yukon, he told them that the pastor was divorced, dishonest, unable to perform adequately due to throat surgery, and guilty of making improper advances to a parishioner. They reversed their decision to "call" that pastor to the Nashville parish. He sued the Executive Presbyter for defamation.

Reverend Neil Munro, the Presbyter, raised both the First Amendment and the "common interest" privilege in his effort to have Reverend Samuel Marshall's claims dismissed. The trial judge agreed with the Presbyter that the First Amendment barred the civil court from interfering in the matter because it clearly involved the qualification and selection of clergy by the church. The Supreme Court of Alaska, however, decided that only the "common interest" privilege applied, and that it could be lost if Reverend Munro was shown to have acted with malice. Dismissing the First Amendment defense by concluding that the court need not "determine if Marshall was qualified to be a pastor or what those qualification may be," the Alaskan Court said:

> Civil common law has long protected this exact type of communication by granting a conditional privilege. "The common interest of members of religious, fraternal, charitable or other non-profit associations, whether incorporated or unincorporated, is recognized as sufficient to support a privilege for communications among themselves concerning the qualifications of the officers and members and their participation in the activities of the society. This is true whether the defamatory matter relates to alleged misconduct of some other member that makes him undesirable for continued membership, or the conduct of a prospective member. So too, the rule is applicable to communications between members and officers of the organization concerning the legitimate conduct of the activities for which it was organized." Reinstatement (Second) of Torts §596 cmt. e. (1977).[120]

Since there was nothing in the appellate opinion to suggest that Reverend Munro had acted with malice toward Pastor Marshall, the Executive Presbyter might still prevail at trial. In the meantime, however, even though this case was probably wrongly decided on the constitutional issues, it stands as a classic example of why the First Amendment should not be the only line of defense erected against civil invasions into church territory.[121]

D. When Nondisclosure Can Be A Problem

Just as disclosure of seminarians' records can lead to problems, so too can non-disclosure. Seminaries can be exposed to liability for failure to comply with statutory reporting requirements and for failure to warn third parties in certain situations. Again, the key for seminaries is to be informed, in consultation with local counsel, of their civil law obligations and to take the appropriate steps to achieve compliance.

1. Statutory Reporting Requirements

Child abuse reporting statutes were discussed in detail above in Part II (D). Suffice it to say that every seminary should be familiar with the requirements of any applicable reporting statutes in its state in order to insure its compliance in the unfortunate situation in which the seminary may come into possession of information alleging child abuse on the part of a seminarian.

There may be other situations in which seminaries may be required to report information on seminarians to government agencies. For example, seminaries that participate in federal student assistance programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 may be required to make referrals to the Office of Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Education if it has information regarding fraud or false statements in connection with student assistance programs.[122] Failure to comply could lead to administrative proceedings resulting possibly in repayments, fines, or limitation on or suspension of the participation of the seminary and its students in the affected program.[123]

2. Student Access To Records

Seminary students may seek access to their records for a variety of reasons. If the seminary refuses access, not only will it likely have an unhappy seminarian on its hands, it may also find itself involved in civil litigation or administrative proceedings.

In 1981 Peter J. Smith was dismissed for academic reasons as a doctoral degree candidate in the Duquesne University Graduate Program in English. Mr. Smith filed suit against the university alleging, among other things, a violation of FERPA because the university refused his request to inspect and review his records and denied his right to a hearing under FERPA regulations.[124] The court rejected Mr. Smith's claim, holding that no private cause of action exists under FERPA.[125] Had Mr. Smith chose the administrative forum (the U.S. Department of Education), rather than federal district court, the outcome may have been different depending on the facts of the case.

Mark Tarka suffered the same fate when he sued the University of Texas at Austin after his application for admission to graduate school was denied. He alleged, in part, that the university had denied him access to records. As in the *Smith* case, the court ruled against Mr. Tarka, holding that there was no private cause of action under FERPA.[126] The court further noted that FERPA does not apply to persons who have not attended the university.[127]

The *Tarka* case illustrates an important point—FERPA applies to students who are or have been in attendance at an educational institution, not to applicants who have not been admitted and attended the educational institution. For seminaries, in practical terms this means that FERPA's requirements do not apply to individuals whose applications for admission have been denied.

The contractual relationship between a seminarian and the seminary may also be the source of potential civil law problems. Courts often look to institutions' catalogs and student handbooks to determine the parameters of the contractual relationship. If a seminary's catalog, student handbook or other documents permit student access to records, the seminary could face a contract claim if it refuses a student's request for access to records. The lesson here is that seminaries should be prepared to uphold statements and provisions that it includes in its official documents and publications in order to minimize potential civil law liability.

3. Failure To Warn Third Parties

Buff Carlin, pastor of the Alpine Assembly of God Church in Louisiana, was sued by the parents of four minor children for failing to warn them that the church's youth director was a potential child molester.[128] Pastor Carlin had been counseling the youth director, David Everett, for his problem. Everett was the neighbor of the children, but neither the children nor the parents were members of Carlin's church. The parents alleged that Everett had molested the children before, during and after his counseling by Pastor Carlin. Carlin never informed them about Everett's criminal conduct, giving rise to their complaint that he had breached his duty to warn them of the danger Everett presented.[129]

The civil law follows the general rule that no one has a duty to control the conduct of another nor to warn others of any danger posed by that conduct. As with most general rules, however, there are exceptions. In this situation, the exceptions provide that a duty to warn does arise where a "special relationship" exists between the potential victim and the person with knowledge of the danger.[130] The problem, of course, is determining just what constitutes such a special relationship. In Pastor Carlin's case, the court said: "Glaringly absent from plaintiffs' allegations is any factual assertion that a special relationship existed between Carlin and plaintiffs which would afford them a right of protection from Everett's criminal conduct."[131] For this reason, the court imposed no duty, and therefore no liability, on Carlin for the sexual molestation of plaintiffs' children by Everett. In so holding, however, the court pointed out two situations that did create a duty to warn. The first was the relationship between the Boy Scouts and the parents of boys in Scouting. The second was the relationship between the Orkin Exterminating Company and the customers who allow exterminators into their homes.

The diversity of the circumstances which have been found to create a special relationship giving rise to a duty to warn make it difficult to fashion a specific rule for seminaries doing screening, testing and counseling of candidates for the priesthood. By engaging in such activities, it is certainly possible that a seminary could become aware of a potentially dangerous person or situation. The question would then arise as to whether the seminary has any special relationships with any potential victims. The civil law makes clear that certain relationships are always special: common carriers to their passengers, innkeepers to their guests, and landowners to those they invite on their property.[132] Beyond these, however, only broad guidelines are provided:

1) what is the foreseeability of the harm;

2) what is the degree of certainty that it will occur;

3) how closely is the failure to warn related to the specific injury;

4) what is the morality and justice of the circumstances;

5) how will the policy in one case prevent future harm;
6) what are the consequences to the community; and
7) is insurance against the risk available at reasonable cost?[133]

Depending on how these questions are answered, a duty to warn may or may not arise.

The special relationship issue also arose in the notorious "clergy malpractice" case of *Nally v. Grace Community Church*.[134] The *Nally* case arose in 1979 when the Nallys sued Grace Community Church for wrongful death after their 24-year-old son committed suicide. The son, who had attempted suicide previously, had been a member of the church and had received counseling from four of its pastors, both before and after his prior attempt. After a series of appeals, the case went to trial but was dismissed by the trial court at the close of plaintiffs' evidence. An intermediate appellate court reversed and the state supreme court granted review on two issues:

> (i) whether we should impose a duty on the pastors and other "nontherapist counselors" (i.e., persons other than licensed psychotherapists who counsel others concerning their emotional and spiritual problems) to refer persons to licensed mental health professionals once suicide becomes a foreseeable risk, and (ii) whether the evidence presented at trial supports plaintiffs' cause of action for wrongful death based on defendants' alleged "intentional infliction of emotional distress" on Nally.[135]

The Court said no to both questions. As to the first ("clergy malpractice") issue, the court said that there was no such duty and that it would contravene public policy to create one.[136] The only time that a duty of care had ever been imposed on counselors to prevent suicide was when a special relationship, beyond the counseling relationship, existed. For example, when the suicidal person was confined to a psychiatric hospital, then a special relationship was found to exist. No previous case, the California court said, had "suggested extending the duty of care to personal or religious counseling relationships in which one person provided nonprofessional guidance to another seeking advice and the counselor had no control over the environment of the individual being counseled."[137] And the court declined to do so in this case.[138] Thus, while "clergy malpractice" has been rejected by the civil courts as a basis for imposing liability on churches, the question of whether a special relationship exists between the church and a particular victim remains. It is that issue, as discussed above, that must be addressed whenever the seminary comes into information indicating that a seminarian may be dangerous to himself or others.

E. Benefits of Waivers and Informed Consent

Tension exists between a seminarian's interest in the confidentiality of his records and the seminary's and diocese's legitimate interest in access to those records in order to evaluate the progress and development of the seminarian as he prepares for the priesthood. The proper use of waivers and informed consents can go a long way to relieving the tension, as well as providing other benefits to the seminarian and the seminary.

To be effective waivers and informed consents should be voluntary, in writing, clearly identify what records or data is involved and the persons and circumstances to which the waiver or consent applies, and be kept on file with the seminarian's records. For example, if a seminarian waives access to confidential recommendations from instructors or others, the waiver should clearly identify what recommendations are involved and the purpose for which the recommendations are intended to be used. In the case of consents to disclose information, the consent should identify what information will be disclosed (*e.g.*, psychological reports), to whom it will be disclosed (*e.g.*, seminary rector, diocesan bishop), and the purpose for which the information is being disclosed. Signed written waivers and consents should be retained in the seminarian's records and seminaries should be careful in handling records to insure that the conditions and scope of the waivers and consents are honored.

Clarity in the drafting of waivers and consents, and the proper use of them, are beneficial to both the seminarian and the seminary. The seminarian can be sure that information in his records will only be used for legitimate purposes. The seminary will have clear direction regarding access to the seminarian's records. In addition, waivers and consents can protect the seminary in the event of litigation, *e.g.*, charges of invasion of privacy or FERPA violations. Because waivers and consents involve both management and legal considerations, local counsel can and should assist the seminary in the drafting of the documents to insure that they will be effective and conform to any applicable civil law requirements.

IV. LEGAL RAMIFICATIONS OF SCREENING AND TESTING

As noted earlier screening, testing and evaluation of candidates are essential components of the seminary process. Without them the seminary would be unable to fulfill its responsibility to select and to educate those individuals who are qualified for the priestly formation program.

The selection and formation of candidates for the priesthood falls squarely within the First Amendment's protection of churches from unwarranted intrusions by the government. Nonetheless, as indicated earlier, the First Amendment's constitutional guarantees do not automatically insure that courts and federal, state and local government officials will not attempt to apply the common law, statutes and administrative rules to actions taken by seminaries in relation to applicants and students. In many cases these civil laws and rules are broadly worded and in almost all cases they are adopted without taking into account the unique and special role that seminaries play in the life of the church. The result in some instances may be tension between civil law requirements and the legitimate activities of seminaries. This may be particularly true, as will be seen below, in the case of civil rights laws.

A. Civil Rights Laws Generally

Every state in the country, the federal government, and many counties and municipalities have all adopted civil rights laws to protect individuals from unlawful discrimination on the part of employers, institutions, businesses and even the government itself. At the state level these laws can vary greatly in the scope of activities prohibited and the extent to which exceptions protect religious institutions, such as seminaries.

To illustrate, the District of Columbia has adopted a human rights law that prohibits discrimination in 13 classifications, *i.e.*, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, physical handicap, source income, and political affiliation.[139] Seminaries are not exempted from the law which protects both students and employees. The law does allow religious educational institutions to give preference in admissions to members of the same religion.[140] On its face the prohibition on sex discrimination applies to private institutions of graduate higher education.[141] The D.C. law does not contain a broad exception based on religious tenets or beliefs as is the case in other jurisdictions.

Georgetown University experienced firsthand the difficulties these kinds of laws can create for religiously affiliated institutions when it refused university recognition to a student gay rights groups. The students sued. The D.C. Court of Appeals held that, while the university could not be compelled to endorse the gay rights group, it could not deny the group access to university facilities and services that were available to other student groups.[142]The *Georgetown* case, as well as cases cited earlier, demonstrate that religious institutions are not immune from litigation and the application of civil rights laws, even where serious First Amendment issues are involved. Seminaries should consult local counsel to determine the extent, if any, to which federal (discussed below), state and local civil rights laws may apply to the relationship between students and the seminary, including its screening and testing program.

B. Federal Civil Rights Laws

The primary federal civil rights laws that apply to seminary students are those that are triggered by the receipt of federal financial assistance. As in the case of FERPA, if a seminary enrolls a student who receives financial aid under any of the federal student assistance programs, the seminary will be subject to certain federal civil rights laws. These laws prohibit discrimination against students[143] by the seminary on the basis of race (including color and national origin),[144] sex,[145] age[146] and disability.[147]

Except for age discrimination,[148] the U.S. Department of Education has adopted regulations implementing the laws relating to race,[149] sex[150] and disability.[151] The procedural requirements of the regulations are basically the same for all three laws. Covered institutions, such as a seminary, are required to sign assurance of compliance forms, adopt nondiscrimination policies, perform self-evaluations, provide notices in catalogs and other general publications directed at applicants and students, and adopt grievance procedures.[152] Seminaries should review their policies, procedures and publications to insure that they are in compliance with any applicable regulations.

The substantive prohibitions on discriminatory activities based on race, sex, and age should not present any difficulties for seminaries covered by the laws. Given the church's clear teaching on racism, it is very unlikely that any seminary would be involved in race discrimination involving students.

In the area of sex discrimination, section 901(a)(1) of Title IX does prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex in the admission policies of institutions of graduate higher education.[153] This section should not present a problem for seminaries because of the religious tenet exception in section 901(a)(3) of Title IX. Under the religious tenet exception, Title IX does not apply when it conflicts with the religious tenets of a religious organization.[154] In a 1974 meeting officials of HEW confirmed to representatives of the United State Catholic Conference that the admissions policies of seminaries would be exempt from coverage under Title IX.

In the area of the age discrimination, the Office of Civil Rights for the U.S. Department of Education has not adopted regulations implementing the Age Discrimination Act of 1975. There is a provision in that Act protecting actions that reasonably take into account age as a factor necessary to the normal operation of covered programs[155] This provision, the absence of regulations under the U.S. Department of Education, and the minute amount of litigation under the Act all suggest that the Act will have very little impact on seminary operations.

The regulations which may cause some tension with seminary practices are the regulations implementing Section 504, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of physical or mental disability. Those regulations prohibit an institution from refusing to admit an otherwise qualified person solely on the basis of disability.[156] The regulations also prohibit an institution of higher education from making preadmission inquiries as to whether an applicant has a disability. On their face, these regulations would seem to be in conflict with the normal screening and testing practices related to the seminary admission process, which includes psychological testing as well as inquiries into a broad range of an applicant's background, including health related matters. Several factors mitigate against this conclusion.

In 1979, the U.S. Supreme Court held that nothing in the language or history of section 504 reflects an intention to limit the freedom of an educational institution to require reasonable physical qualifications for admission to a clinical nursing teaching program. In that case, Southeastern Community College refused to admit an applicant who, after an inquiry from a faulty member, acknowledged a hearing problem. An expert for the College concluded that the applicant's hearing disability made it unsafe for her to practice as a nurse. In ruling in favor of the College the Court noted that section 504 by its terms does not compel educational institutions to disregard the disabilities of individuals or to make substantial modifications in their programs to allow disabled persons to participate. It also noted that legitimate physical qualifications may be essential to participation in particular programs. Finally, the Court, departing from the normal rule, called into question the amount of deference courts should give to the section 504 regulations.[157]

In a later case the Second Circuit Court of Appeals held that New York University Medical School did not violate section 504 when it took into account an applicant's history of mental illness in denying an application for admission. The court found that the school was entitled in determining whether the applicant was qualified, to be advised of and to take into account the mental impairment, since it is directly relevant to qualifications and bears upon the ability to function as a student and doctor, to get along with other persons, and to withstand stress of the type encountered in medical training and practice. The court emphasized that considerable judicial defence must be given to the evaluation of the institution itself, absent proof that its standards serve no purpose other than to deny an education to disabled persons.[158]

If it is valid for Southeastern Community College and New York University to take into account the physical and mental impairments of its applicants, so too, given the unique training involved in the seminary formation process and the stress associated with its, it follows that seminaries should be able to take into account legitimate physical and mental qualifications for applicants during the screening and testing process. In this regard it is important to keep in mind that section 504 has been amended to clarify that homosexuality and bisexuality are not considered disabilities.[159] In addition, transvestism, transsexualism, pedophilia, exhibitionism, voyeurism, gender identity disorders not resulting from physical impairments, and other sexual behavior disorders are not considered disabilities under section 504.[160] Inquiries by seminaries relating to these kinds of behavior pose no problem under section 504 because they fall outside the scope of the section.

In light of existing case law, the unique training and qualifications necessary for a successful formation program, the constitutional protection under the First Amendment afforded the church in the selection and training of seminarians, and the current problems of churches and other institutions with instances of child abuse, it is highly unlikely that courts would invalidate legitimate screening and testing activities of seminaries designed to produce well-rounded candidates for the priesthood.

In the unlikely event that a seminarian alleges that a seminary has discriminated against the seminarian in violation of one or more these four federal antidiscrimination statutes, or any state or local law, local counsel should be consulted immediately. Addressing complaints directly in a timely fashion will help to avoid administrative proceedings which could lead to termination of participation of the seminary in federal programs and to litigation which could result in damages or other remedies.

CONCLUSION

Seminaries exist for the purpose of preparing seminarians for the priesthood. This is inherently a religious function entitled to constitutional protection under the First Amendment. The existence of constitutional protection, however, does not mean that seminaries are immune from the reach of civil law in their dealings with students. The receipt of data and information on seminaries raises interrelated questions of confidentiality and disclosure. Students have legitimate interests in the confidentiality of records pertaining to them. Seminary and diocesan officials, and in some instances government officials, have legitimate interests in having access to the records of those being prepared for the priesthood. There is tension among these interests which, if not handled properly, can result in conflicts with civil law. The refrain that has been repeated throughout this discussion bears repeating once again—consult your local attorney when questions involving civil law arise. Local counsel can assist the seminary in developing policies and procedures that will respect the confidentiality interests of seminarians while enabling the seminary to carry out its essential functions without unwarranted interference from civil law.

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NOTES

1. Lexington Theological Seminary v. Vance, 596 S.W.2d 11 (Ky. 1979).
2. *Babcock v. New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary*, 554 So.2d 90 (La.App. 4th Cir., 1989), *writ denied*, 558 So.2d 607 (1990), *cert. denied*, 111 S.Ct. 214 (1990).
3. *See generally St. Agnes Hospital v. Riddick*, 748 F. Supp. 319 (D. Md. 1990).
4. *EEOC v. Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary*, 651 F.2d 277, 283 (5th Cir. 1981), *cert. denied*, 456 U.S. 905 (1982).
5. *Serbian Eastern Orthodox Diocese v. Milivojevich*, 426 U.S. 696, 708-09 (1976).
6. *Gonzales v. Roman Catholic Archbishop of Manila*, 280 U.S. 1, 16 (1929).
7. *McClure v. Salvation Army*, 460 F.2d 553, 558-60 (5th Cir. 1992), *cert. denied*, 409 U.S. 896 (1972).
8. See note 2, *supra*, and accompanying text.
9. *See also* CODE OF CANON LAW, Canons 238, 1258. References to canon law in this review of the civil law should not be considered authoritative. As the Commentary on the 1983 Code warns:

   > The Code's juridic style must be carefully studied by those who apply it and those who are affected by it, *especially if their attitude toward law in general has been created by the experience of a somewhat different legal system*. The canons are marked by a certain abstractness—even artificiality. In a way, all forms of law are artificial, but canon law seems, by its conciseness, to highlight this characteristic. In the concrete, therefore, it often admits of varying interpretations and applications.

   THE CODE OF CANON LAW: A TEXT AND COMMENTARY, 13 (Coriden, Green, Heintschel, eds. 1985) (emphasis added). Consultation with a canon lawyer concerning issues raised here is highly recommended.
10. *Southwestern Baptist*, 651 F.2d at 283-84; *see also McClure*, 460 F.2d at 560-61.
11. *Southwestern Baptist*, 651 F.2d at 286 (footnotes omitted).
12. *Grove City College v. Bell*, 465 U.S. 555, 575-76 (1984) (citation omitted).
13. *See* notes 6 & 7, *supra*, and accompanying text.
14. *United States v. Dube*, 820 F.2d 886, 889 (7th Cir. 1987).
15. *In re Grand Jury Investigation*, 918 F.2d 374, 381 (3rd Cir. 1990).
16. *Grand Jury*, 918 F.2d at 385 n.13.
17. *See, e.g.*, code of canon law, Canons 983, 1388.
18. *Cimijotti v. Paulsen*, 219 F.Supp. 621, 624 (N.D. Iowa 1963) (tribunal proceedings privileged).

19. *Eckmann v. Board of Education*, 106 F.R.D. 70 (E.D.Mo. 1985); *In re Murtha*, 115 N.J.Super. 380, 279 A.2d 889 (1971).
20. *Eckmann*, 106 F.R.D. at 72.
21. *Murtha*, 279 A.2d at 892.
22. Sister Margaret also made a First Amendment Free Exercise argument but the court found nothing in "Catholic doctrine or practice" that gave her the right to claim the priest/penitent privilege; the court concluded that she acted out of personal conscience not religious requirements. *Murtha*, 279 A.2d at 893-94. One court has afforded First Amendment protection to tribunal proceedings under certain circumstances. *Cimijotti v. Paulsen*, 230 F.Supp. 39, 41-42 (N.D. Iowa 1964), *aff'd*, 340 F.2d 613 (8th Cir. 1965).
23. *See, e.g., Pagano v. Hadley*, 100 F.R.D. 758, 760 (D. Del. 1984).
24. *Scott v. Hammock*, 133 F.R.D. 610 (D.Utah 1990) (record of excommunication protected by privilege).
25. *Pagano*, 100 F.R.D. at 761.
26. *United States v. Noriega*, 917 F.2d 1543, 1550 (11th Cir. 1990), *cert. denied, sub. nom., Cable News Network v. Noriega*, 111 S.Ct. 451 (1990). Attorneys are also bound by professional ethics to protect their clients' confidential communications. *See, e.g.*, Rule 1.6, Model Rules of Professional Conduct (American Bar Association 1983).
27. Like attorneys, physicians, psychologists and therapists may be under a professional ethical obligation to protect their clients' confidences. *See* note *26, supra*. The discussion here, however, is limited to what the civil law mandates.
28. *Huzjak v. United States*, 118 F.R.D. 61, 63 (N.D. Ohio 1987).
29. *Huzjak*, 118 F.R.D. at 63-64.
30. *United States v. Corona*, 829 F.2d 562, 567 (11th Cir. 1988), *cert. denied*, 489 U.S. 1084 (1989) (quoting *United States v. Nixon*, 418 U.S. 683, 710 (1974)).
31. *Doe v. Special Investigations Agency*, 779 F.Supp. 21, 24 (E.D. Pa. 1991).
32. *Walstad v. Alaska*, 818 P.2d 695 (Alaska, 1991).
33. *Walstad*, 818 P.2d at 697 (the minister was also a licensed therapist).
34. *Ferrell v. Brick*, 678 F.Supp. 111 (E.D. Pa. 1987).
35. *Ferrell*, 678 F.Supp. at 113.
36. *E.g., State ex rel. Juvenile Dept. for Lane County v. Brown*, 528 P.2d 569 (Or.App., 1974), *cert. denied*, 421 U.S. 1003 (1975) (licensed physician who was not a licensed psychologist not covered by psychotherapist/patient privilege even though retained as a psychiatrist).
37. Sexual abuse of children by adults is commonly referred to as pedophilia, a deviant psychosexual condition for which treatment is possible but no cure is known. There is also no known method of psychological screening to reveal pedophilia. The listed scenarios are those where voluntary disclosure may occur.
38. In many states, a failure to report may also expose a person to a statutorily authorized civil action for damages proximately caused by the failure to

report. Generally, however, immunity for erroneous reporting is also provided by statute.

39. *People v. Hodges*, 13 Cal.Rptr.2d 412 (Cal.Super., App. Div., 1992).
40. *Hodges*, 13 Cal.Rptr.2d at 417.
41. *Hodges*, 13 Cal.Rptr.2d at 420.
42. *See, e.g., Pesce v. Morton East High School*, 830 F.2d 789 (7th Cir. 1987).
43. *State v. Motherwell*, 114 Wash.2d 353, 788 P.2d 1066 (1990).
44. The discussion here will focus on seminarians rather than employees.
45. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g.
46. 34 C.F.R. § 99.1(a).
47. 34 C.F.R. § 99.32(a)(1). It should be noted that FERPA applies to records of students and not applicants who were rejected and did not attend the educational institution. *See* Part III (D)(2)(a) below.
48. 34 C.F.R. § 99.32(a)(3).
49. 34 C.F.R. § 99.32(d).
50. *See* 34 C.F.R. Part 668. Aid programs subject to these requirements include the Pell Grant Program (34 C.F.R. Part 690), the Perkins Loan Program (34 C.F.R. Part 674), the Stafford Loan Program (34 C.F.R. Part 684), and others.
51. 34 C.F.R. § 668.23(f).
52. 34 C.F.R. § 668.36.
53. 34 C.F.R. § 668.51.
54. 34 C.F.R. Subpart G.
55. Md. Education Code Ann. § 13B.02.02.13(D).
56. *See* 31 D.C. Code § 1607(3)(A); Md. Education Code Ann. § 11-401.
57. 34 C.F.R. § 602.17.
58. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(d). For students under eighteen years of age the right vests in the parent(s). 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(a).
59. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(a)(4)(A).
60. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(a)(4)(B)(i).
61. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(a)(4)(B)(iii).
62. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(a)(4)(B)(iv).
63. There is a fourth exception to FERPA's definition of educational records relating to records of a law enforcement unit created for the purposes of law enforcement.
64. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(a)(1)(B)(i).
65. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(a)(1)(B)(iii).
66. 34 C.F.R. § 99.6.
67. 34 C.F.R. § 99.6(a)(7).
68. 34 C.F.R. § 99.6(a)(2)(ii).
69. 34 C.F.R. § 99.11.
70. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(B).
71. 34 C.F.R. § 99.34(a).
72. 34 C.F.R. § 99.31(a)(1).

73. This would seem to be a rare situation. The usual norm is that the seminary will have its own separate civil law identity.
74. *See* 20 U.S.C. 1232g(b)(1)(B).
75. Final Rule on Education Records, 41 Fed. Reg. 24661, 24663 (1976).
76. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1).
77. 34 C.F.R. § 99.30(b).
78. 34 C.F.R. § 99.30(c).
79. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1), (2).
80. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(a)(5).
81. *See Smith v. Duquesne*, 612 *F. Supp.* 72 (W.D. Pa. 1985); *Tarka v. Franklin*, 891 F. 2d 102 (5th Cir. 1989).
82. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(f).
83. 34 C.F.R. Subpart E.
84. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(f).
85. 34 C.F.R. § 99.67; 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(f).
86. *Higgins v. Maher*, 210 Cal.App.3d 1168, 258 Cal.Rptr. 757 (1989), *cert. denied*, 439 U.S. 1080 (1990).
87. *Higgins*, 210 Cal.App.3d at 1176.
88. *See* note 7, *supra*, and accompanying text.
89. CODE OF CANON LAW, Canon 220.
90. *See also McElroy v. Guilfoyle*, 247 N.J. Super. 582, 589 A.2d 1082 (1990).
91. *Compare Welter v. Seton Hall University*, 128 N.J. 279, 608 A.2d 206 (1992), *with Alicea v. New Brunswick Theological Seminary*, 128 N.J. 303, 608 A.2d 218 (1992).
92. *See* note 48, *supra*, and accompanying text.
93. *Katz v. United States*, 389 U.S. 347, 350-51 (1967).
94. *McNally v. Pulitzer Publishing Co.*, 532 F.2d 69, 76 (8th Cir. 1976), *cert. denied*, 429 U.S. 855 (1976).
95. *Ruzicka v. Conde Nast Publications*, 939 F.2d 578, 583 n.8 (8th Cir. 1991).
96. *McNally*, 532 F.2d at 78.
97. *Guinn v. Collinsville Church of Christ*, 775 F.2d 766 (Okl. 1989).
98. *Guinn*, 775 P.2d at 777.
99. *Hadnot v. Shaw*, 826 P.2d 978 (Okl. 1992).
100. For this proposition, the court relied upon *Paul v. Watchtower Bible and Tract Society*, 819 F.2d 875 (9th Cir. 1987), *cert. denied*, 484 U.S. 926 (practice of shunning not actionable).
101. *See* part III.E., *infra*.
102. THE PROGRAM OF PRIESTLY FORMATION (Fourth Edition) ¶¶519, 520.
103. *See* note 7, *supra*, and accompanying text.
104. *See* part I.B., *supra*.
105. *Garvey v. Dickinson College*, 763 F.Supp. 796, 798 (M.D.Pa. 1991).
106. *Meehan v. Amax Oil & Gas*, 796 F.Supp. 461, 467 (D.Colo. 1992).
107. *Garvey*, 763 F.Supp. at 798 (quoting *Gaiardo v. Ethyl Corp.*, 697 F. Supp. 1377, 1383 (M.D.Pa. 1986) (Kosik, J.)).

108. Much less important or sensitive communications have been held to come within the "common interest" privilege. *E.g.*, *Lindquist v. Reusser*, 11 Cal.App.4th 667, 14 Cal.Rptr.2d 241 (1992) (horse owners' discussion of breeder's practices).

109. *See* note 57, *supra*, and accompanying text.

110. *Gorman v. Swaggart*, 524 So.2d 915 (La.App. 1988), *writ denied*, 530 So.2d 571-75 (La. 1988), *cert. denied, sub. nom.*, *Treely v. Gorman*, 489 U.S. 1017 (1989).

111. *See* note 54, *supra*, and accompanying text.

112. *Gorman*, 524 So.2d at 920.

113. *Hadnot*, 826 P.2d at 981.

114. *See* part III.C.2.a, *supra*.

115. *Gorman*, 524 So.2d at 922; *Gunn*, 775 P.2d at 778; *Yeldell v. Tutt*, 913 F.2d 533, 540 (8th Cir. 1990).

116. *Yeldell*, 913 F.2d at 541.

117. *Joiner v. Weeks*, 383 So.2d 101 (La. App. 1980).

118. *Joiner*, 383 So.2d at 106.

119. *Marshall v. Munro*, 845 P.2d 424, 1993 WL 17195 (Alaska, Jan. 29, 1993) (slip opinion). At the time of this writing, the opinion had not yet been officially published.

120. *Marshall*, 845 P.2d 424, (Alaska, 1993) (slip opinion at 10).

1212. *See* part I.B., *supra*

122. 34 C.F.R. § 668.14(g).

123. 34 C.F.R. §§ 668.61, 668.81-97.

124. *Smith v. Duquesne University*, (12 F. Supp. 72,79) (W.D. Pa. 1985)

125. *Id.*

126. *Tarka v. Franklin*, 891 F. 2d 102, 104 (5th Cir. 1989).

127. Id. at 105-07. The court's interpretation is consistent with the express provisions of FERPA, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(a)(6).

128. *Miller v. Everett*, 576 So.2d 1162 (La. App. 1991).

129. The circumstances of this case have the potential of raising several related issues, including priest/penitent privilege (*see* part II.A., *supra*) and statutory reporting requirements (*see* part II.D., *supra*); however, the only question addressed on appeal was the failure to warn.

130. *Miller*, 576 So.2d at 1164.

131. *Miller*, 576 So.2d at 1164.

132. *Nash v. The Fifth Amendment*, 279 Cal.Rptr. 465, 228 Cal.App.3d 1106 (1991).

133. *Nash*, 279 Cal.Rptr. at 466-67.

134. *Nally v. Grace Community Church of the Valley*, 47 Cal.3rd 278, 253 Cal.Rptr. 97 (1988) (In Bank), *cert. denied*, 490 U.S. 1007 (1989).

135. *Nally*, 47 Cal.3rd at 283.

136. As to the second issue, the court found that plaintiffs had been unable to establish the elements necessary to prove their case.

137. *Nally*, 47 Cal.3rd at 294.

138. In other cases and other states, civil courts have likewise refused to create a new "clergy malpractice" cause of action. *See, e.g., Schmidt v. Bishop*, 779 F. Supp. 321, 328 (S.D. N.Y. 1991) (child sex abuse by clergyman); *Byrd v. Faber*, 57 Ohio St. 56, 58, 565 N.E. 2d 584, 587 (1991) (sexual misconduct by clergyman during marriage counseling); *DeStephano v. Grabrian*, 763 P.2d 275, 285 (Cal. 1988) (En Banc) (sexual misconduct by priest during marriage counseling).
139. 1 D.C. Code § 2520(1).
140. 1 D.C. Code § 2503(b).
141. 1 D.C. Code § 2521(a).
142. *Gay Rights Coalition v. Georgetown University*, 536 A. 2d 1 (App. D.C. 1987).
143. These laws also protect employees, a topic beyond the scope of this discussion.
144. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d.
145. Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972, 20 U.S.C. § 1681.
146. The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, 42 U.S.C. § 6102.
147. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794.
148. Other federal agencies have adopted regulations implementing the Age Discrimination Act.
149. 34 C.F.R. Part 100.
150. 34 C.F.R. Part 106.
151. 34 C.F.R. Part 104.
152. *See, e.g.*, 34 C.F.R. §§ 1045, 104.6 104.7, 104.8.
153. 20 U.S.C. § 1681(a)(1).
154. 20 U.S.C. § 1681(a)(3).
155. 42 U.S.C. § 6103(b)(1)(A).
156. 20 U.S.C. §§ 104.4.
157. *Southeastern Community College v. Davis*, 442 U.S. 2361 (1979).
158. *Doe v. New York University*, 666 F. 2d 761 (2nd Cir. 1981).
159. 29 U.S.C. § 706(8)(E).
160. 29 U.S.C. § 706(8)(F).

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